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THE

HISTORY OF THE JEWS

FROM THE

DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM

TO THE

NINETEENTH CENTURY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

BY HANNAH ADAMS.

VOL. I.

"And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people from the one end of the earth even unto the other;—and among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest."
Deut. xxviii. 64, 65.

BOSTON:
PRINTED BY JOHN ELIOT, JUN.
1812.

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Jud 103.12

DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS, *to wit :*
District Clerk's Office.

BE IT REMEMBERED, that on the eighth of February, A. D. 1812, and in the thirty sixth year of the Independence of the United States of America, Hannah Adams, of the said district has deposited in this office the title of a Book the right whereof she claims as author, in the words following, *to wit :*

The History of the Jews from the destruction of Jerusalem to the nineteenth century. In two volumes. By Hannah Adams. Vol. I. "And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest."

In conformity to the act of the Congress of the United States, intitled, "An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned;" and also to an Act intitled, "An act supplementary to an Act, intitled, An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned; and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving and etching historical, and other prints."

WILLIAM S. SHAW, { *Clerk of the District of Massachusetts.*

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PREFACE.

THE history of the Jews since their dispersion has been but little investigated even by the literary part of the world, and is almost entirely unknown to the general mass of mankind. The design of this work, including the introduction, is to give a brief sketch of their situation, after their return from the Babylonian captivity, to the nineteenth century. The compiler is sensible, that the subject is not calculated to engage the attention of those readers whose object is merely amusement. Instead of a narration of new and entertaining events, they will find a tedious succession of oppressions and persecutions, and probably turn with disgust from the gloomy picture of human guilt and wretchedness.

To the speculative and inquisitive part of mankind the subject must, however, appear more interesting. The history of the Jews is remarkable, above that of all other nations, for the number and cruelty of the persecutions they have endured. They are venerable for the antiquity of their origin. They are discriminated from the rest of mankind by their

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wonderful destination, peculiar habits, and religious rites. Since the destruction of Jerusalem, and their universal dispersion, we contemplate the singular phenomenon of a nation subsisting for ages without its civil and religious polity, and thus surviving its political existence.

But the Jews appear in a far more interesting and important light when considered as a standing monument of the truth of the christian religion; as the ancient church of God to whom were committed the sacred oracles; as a people selected from all nations to make known and preserve the knowledge of the true God. To them the gospel was first preached, and from them the first christian church in Jerusalem was collected. To them we are indebted for the scriptures of the New, as well as of the Old Testament. To them were given the spirit of prophecy, and power of working miracles. From them were derived an illustrious train of prophets and apostles. To use the language of an inspired writer, "To them pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, the service of God, and the promises, and of them, as concerning the flesh, Christ came."

The history of the Jews by Mr. Basnage, a learned French refugee, who was pastor of the Walloon church at the Hague, and died in

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1723, is the principal authority made use of in the first part of this history; the references are made to the translation of Mr. Taylor, published in 1708, which received the approbation of the author. The compiler is greatly indebted to the writings of M. Gregoire, formerly bishop of Blois, senator, member of the National Institute, &c. &c. His excellent "Essay on the Reformation of the Jews" has afforded much important information respecting this extraordinary people. His late valuable work, entitled "Histoire des Sectes Religieuses," published at Paris, 1810, besides interesting and entertaining accounts of the various denominations of Christians, contains several curious articles respecting the Jews. The works of David Levi have furnished materials for what is said of the religious tenets and ceremonies of his brethren. Occasional assistance has been given by modern travellers, whom curiosity has induced to investigate the present condition of this singular people. The learned Dr. Buchanan, in his valuable works, particularly his "Researches in Asia," has furnished authentic documents respecting the state of the eastern Jews. Some recent intelligence concerning those in Europe has been collected from a late work of Mr. Adam, "entitled "The Religious World Displayed," publish-

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ed 1809. The respectable author observes in his preface, that "he was indebted for particulars respecting them to Joshua Van Oven, a learned, distinguished, and worthy member of the society of German Jews." Various other authors will be found referred to in the history; but the above mentioned have furnished the principal materials for the work.

To the intelligent and well informed the difficulty of collecting the history of a people so little known, particularly in this country, during the last and present century, wholly from desultory and unconnected materials, will appear obvious. The compiler can only say, that however deficient and ill arranged her history may be, she has spared no exertions in her power to collect authentic documents, and has used them to the best of her ability. But while she relies on the candour and indulgence of the publick, she cannot forbear to express the warmest gratitude to those respectable gentlemen whose generous patronage has enabled her to devote her time to literary pursuits.

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INTRODUCTION.

SECTION I.

Of the state of the Jews under the Persian monarchy; and the changes which took place after the Babylonish captivity.

THE Jews* having remained in captivity seventy years, according to the prediction of the prophet Jeremiah,† were restored to their native country by Cyrus the great, king of Persia. For this purpose he issued a decree, in the first year of his reign, by which they were permitted to return to Palestine, and rebuild their city and temple. This

B. C. 536.

* So denominated from the name Judah, as this tribe obtained the preeminence, and was more numerous than that of Benjamin. All the descendants of Jacob were anciently called Israel, or children of Israel, till the time that ten of the tribes revolted from the house of David: (See 1st. of Kings.) These ten tribes were afterwards called the *house* of *Israel*, and the other two tribes, of Judah and Benjamin, the *house* of *Judah*. From time to time many of the house of Israel joined that of Judah for the enjoyment of religious privileges; (1 Chron. ix. 3.) became incorporated with them, and were with them carried captive to Babylon. Many of these embraced the opportunity of returning to Judea after the captivity; for the decrees of the Persian kings extended to all the house of Israel. The people of Judah and Israel, after their return, were blended together under the name of *Jews*.—*Prideaux's Connection, Vol. I. p.* 190—270.

† xxv. 11. "And these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years."

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opportunity was joyfully embraced by the most zealous of the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi. A large part of the Jewish captives, who chose to remain in Babylon, made liberal contributions towards assisting their brethren.*

B. C. 534. Soon after the return of the Jews, they began with alacrity and zeal to rebuild their altar, and laid the foundation of their temple. While they were engaged in this important undertaking the Samaritans† expressed an earnest desire to assist in the completion of the building. But as they blended the worship of their false deities with that of the God of Israel, the Jews rejected their request, alleging

* Ezra i. 6.

† The Samaritans were originally heathen colonies from different countries. After the king of Assyria had taken Samaria, the capital of the ten tribes, he removed the greatest part of the Israelites into Babylon and Assyria. And in order to repeople the desolate country, he brought colonies from Babylon, Cutha, Ava, Hamath and Sepharvaim, and established them in the cities of Samaria instead of those whom he had carried into captivity. These people being immediately after their settlement much infested with lions, attributed this calamity to their neglect of the tutelary deity of this country, and petitioned the king to send one of the captive Jewish priests to instruct them how to worship the God of Israel. A priest was accordingly sent back, who took up his residence at Bethel, and established the worship of the true God. Yet while Jehovah was feared because of his supposed influence in that land, the gods of the Babylonians and other countries had divine honours paid to them. This mixture of idolatry with the Mosaic worship continued till the building of the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim.—*Fleury's Ancient Israelites, p.* 352.

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that, as the decree of the Persian monarch extended only to the house of Israel, they could not admit them to participate in the work. This refusal gave rise to that implacable enmity which subsisted between the Samaritans and Jews;* and induced the former to exert themselves to obstruct the building of the temple. In consequence of their malicious attempts, the erection of the sacred edifice was suspended, till Darius issued an edict which not only ratified the grants of Cyrus, but denounced a severe penalty against all who obstructed the work. When this important decree was communicated to the Jews, they rapidly proceeded in the building, which was finished in the 6th year of Darius, and the dedication performed in the month Adar with all imaginable splendour and solemnity. †

The history of the Old Testament closes with an account of the restoration of the Jews to Palestine, and the building of their city and temple under Ezra the priest, and Nehemiah the governour. The assiduous labours of these pious and eminent men to reform the abuses of the Jewish state and church, to enforce the observance of the Mosaic law, and restore divine worship to its original purity, are recorded in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. B. C. 349.

* John iv. 9. † Ezra vi. 16—17.

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It appears from the sacred records, that the Jews, after their return from captivity, were in a feeble state under the first Persian monarchs. They were exposed to the envy and malice of those strangers who resided in the vicinity, in particular to the insults and calumnies of the Samaritans. It is also evident from the cruel edict which Haman obtained against them, from which they were saved by the powerful intercession of queen Esther, that they were in danger of being destroyed upon the least intimation of the king's pleasure. By degrees, however, their affairs were established, and though they were subjected to an easy tribute, they lived under their own laws, in the form of a commonwealth, governed by the high priest, and the council of seventy two elders; and exercised among themselves the power of life and death.* Jerusalem being at length rebuilt,

* The grand council of the nation called the Sanhedrim, which assembled in an apartment of the temple at Jerusalem, possessed the power of life and death. The Jews styled it a hedge to the laws, because the members of the council had authority to interpret it at certain times and on certain occasions, as they thought proper. Its authority extended over all the synagogues in Judea and remote countries, and no appeal could be made from its sentence. Whether this consistory of seventy elders was a perpetual, or only a temporary institution, is a subject of dispute. The Jews, and after them Grotius, Selden, Lightfoot, and several other learned christians, maintain that it was first instituted by Moses; that the seventy-two elders appointed to assist him were its first members; and that the Sanhedrim, so famous in the latter ages of Jewish polity, subsisted after his time until the destruction of the temple. But Bas-

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fortified and repeopled, began to resume some appearance of its former splendour, and the temple was honoured by the offerings of strangers.*

After the death of Nehemiah, the government of Judea appears to have been joined to the prefecture of Syria, from which the high priests received their authority.† This circumstance induced many persons to aspire to that high office merely through ambition and avarice who were destitute of zeal for religion, or love for their country. For whole centuries the office of high priest being the chief object of men's ambition, the violent contests for the sacerdotal dignity, and the arbitrary conduct of those who obtained it, involved the Jewish nation in various calamities.

A remarkable instance of the truth of this assertion occured in the 34th. year of Artaxerxes Mnemon; at which period Joiada was succeeded in the high priesthood by his son Johanan. Some time after his investiture he B. C. 373.

nage and others have attempted to prove that the court of the Sanhedrim was first established in the time of the Maccabees.—*Basnage, p.* 400; *Jennings' Jewish Antiquities, Vol. I. p.* 39.

* Fleury's Ancient Israelites.

† The candidates purchased this office from the Syrian governour, and retained it by means of money; hence they oppressed the people with taxes to enable them to fulfil their pecuniary engagements.

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received a visit from his brother Joshua, who asserted that Bagoses, the governour of Syria, had promised to transfer the sacred dignity to him. A dispute immediately ensued, and Joshua was slain in the interior court of the temple. Bagoses receiving intelligence of this event, severely upbraided the Jews with defiling the habitation of their God, and imposed a heavy fine upon the pontiff, which was not taken off till the death of Artaxerxes changed the face of affairs. The Jews were, however, by no means free from trouble in the reign of his successor; for Ochus having subdued the greatest part of Phoenicia, carried his victorious arms into Judea; reduced Jericho, and sent a great number of the inhabitants into captivity. Ten years after this event Johanan died, and was succeeded by his son Jaddua.*

After the Babylonish captivity the Jews retained a constant aversion to idolatry, which they justly supposed was the principal cause of their expulsion from their native land.

It has been assigned as a reason for this change, that previous to the captivity they had no synagogues† for public instruction, nor

* Prideaux's Connection, Vol. II. p. 658.

† Dr. Prideaux and other learned writers have maintained that there were not any synagogues before the captivity, as there is no mention of them in the Old Testament, but after that period their number was very great. They were places of prayer and religious

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places for religious worship, except the temple and the cities of the Levites. In consequence of which the divine laws were neglected and forgotten, and they were easily allured into the superstitious practices of their idolatrous neighbours. But after their return, they had synagogues erected among them in every city, which were opened not for ceremonial worship, as sacrificing, for this was confined to the temple; but for praying, preaching, reading the law,* divine worship and social duties. The people repaired to the synagogue morning and evening for prayer, and on sabbaths and festivals the law was read and expounded to them. The custom of reading the scriptures and preaching in the synagogues is supposed to have been introduced by Ezra.†

assemblies for the worship of God. The times of the synagogue service were three days every week besides fasts and festivals. The Jews also attended prayers three times every day, in the morning, afternoon, and at night. At the east end in every synagogue is an ark or chest, in commemoration of the ark of the covenant which was in the temple; and in this ark they lock up the Pentateuch, written upon vellum with a particular ink.—*See Prideaux's Connection, Vol. II. p. 534, 535, and Picart's religious ceremonies of the Jews.*

* The mode of worship adopted in the Jewish synagogues subsequent to the captivity differed but little from the present worship of christian assemblies; for it consisted of three parts, reading the scriptures, prayer, and preaching.—*Grave's Lectures on the Pentateuch.* Published 1807.

† We have a short but beautiful description of Ezra's first preaching in Nehemiah viii. The Jews had liturgies for their prayers, in which are all the prescribed forms of their synagogue worship.—*Prideaux's Connection, Vol. II. p. 537.*

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The reformation, begun by Ezra and others, at length degenerated into formality and superstition; and when the Jews first deviated from the purity of their morals, and the simplicity of their religious worship, their zeal for the rites and ceremonies of their law increased. It is supposed the change took place soon after miracles and prophecies ceased,* which had in a great measure prevented them from taking the shadow for the substance of religion.†

It is evident that soon after the termination of the prophetic age,‡ the Jews began to corrupt the law of Moses, by introducing certain precepts and institutions which they professed to have received by oral tradition from the most ancient time. This traditionary law, which chiefly respected religious ceremonies, fastings and other practices distinct from the moral duties of life, at length obtained with the greater part of the Jewish nation a degree of authority equal to that of the Mosaic law; whilst the minor part, rejecting these innovations, adhered strictly to the institutions of their sacred oracles. These two general classes, which do not appear to have been dis-

* From the time of Malachi, the Jews had not been favoured with any prophet, or authorized instructer.

† Picart's ceremonies and religious customs of the Jews.

‡ Enfield's Philosophy, Vol. II. p. 171.

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tinguished by any peculiar appellation, gradually adopted other tenets and customs, and at length formed several distinct sects, of which the principal were the Sadducees, the Caraites, the Pharisees, and the Essenes.* These denominations were formed at different periods after the spirit of prophecy ceased from Israel, and were in a flourishing state at the time of our Saviour's appearance upon earth.

SECTION II.

Sketch of the history of the Jews under Alexander and his successors to the revolt of Mattathias.

THE period foretold in the prophetic pages† at length arrived, when the mighty empire of Persia was subdued by Alexander the great, 208 years after its conquest by Cyrus. The Jews gave a striking proof of their fidelity to Darius Codomanus, the last Persian monarch, by refusing to assist Alexander in the siege of Tyre. The Macedonian hero, exasperated at this refusal, after the conquest of that city led his victorious army against Jerusalem.‡ B. C. 333.

At this alarming crisis, Jaddua, the high priest, offered sacrifices and supplications to the God of Israel, and being, as it is said, di-

* See an account of these sects in Section 5.

† Daniel ii. 39. ‡ Josephus' Jewish Antiquities.

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rected by a vision in the night, went forth the following day to meet the conqueror, dressed in his pontifical robes, attended by the priests in sacerdotal vestments, and the people in white garments. Alexander, struck with profound awe at the sight of this solemn procession, bowed himself down before the high priest, and adored the name of Jehovah, inscribed on his mitre. In reply to those who expressed their astonishment, that the victorious monarch of so many nations should pay homage to a Jewish priest, he declared, that during his abode in Macedonia, he had seen this pontiff in a vision, encouraging him to pursue the war against the Persians, and promising him complete victory. He was therefore convinced that he had engaged in this expedition under the conduct of God, whom he worshipped in the person of his high priest. The king then entered Jerusalem in the midst of the procession, and offered sacrifices in the temple, where Jaddua shewed him the prophecy of Daniel, that a Grecian king should overturn the Persian empire. This prediction heightened his confidence of success.*

Alexander after this event highly favoured the Jewish nation by exempting them from

* Such is the account given by Josephus and some other historians.—*Josephus' History of the Jews, and Rollin's Ancient History.*

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paying the usual tribute on the seventh, or sabbatical year; permitting them to live under their own laws, and enjoy the free exercise of their religion. He transplanted many of them into a new city which he built in Egypt, and called Alexandria, after his own name, granting them privileges and immunities equal to those enjoyed by his Macedonian subjects.*

Upon the extinction of the Persian monarchy, in consequence of Alexander's conquests,† the Samaritans endeavoured to accomplish a civil and ecclesiastical union with the Jews. For this purpose Sanballat, governour of Samaria, gave his daughter in marriage to Menasses, the brother of Jaddua the high priest, fully expecting that the succession in the priesthood would devolve upon Menasses, and that by this means a coalition might be effected. Sanballet upon finding that the Jews, particularly the members of the Sanhedrim, highly resented this profane alliance, took his son in law under his protection, and having obtained permission from Alexander to build a

B. C. 333.

* Prideaux's Connection, p. 696—697. Fleury's Ancient Israelites, p. 235.

† After the conquests of Alexander a distinction is made of the *Hellenist* Jews. This name was given them because they mingled with the Greeks, spoke their language, and read the scriptures in it after the septuagint version.—*Basnage, p. 527.*

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temple on mount Gerizim, appointed Menasses its high priest. A powerful body of priests and Israelites who had been involved in similar connections joined the Samaritans.* The erection of the temple highly exasperated the Jews; the violent animosity between the parties increased, and gave rise to frequent hostilities.†

B. C. 324. After the death of Alexander, the Macedonian empire was divided among four of his generals; and Judea being situated between Egypt and Syria became subject to all the revolutions and wars in which his successors were engaged against each other. It was at first governed by Laomedon, the Mitylenian, one of Alexander's captains, and after he was defeated by Ptolemy Soter, king of Egypt, the Jews refused to violate their engagements to him. Enraged at their resistance, Ptolomy marched to Jerusalem, and being apprized of the religious veneration of the Jews for the sabbath, fraudulently surprised and took the city on that day, and carried a hundred thousand of the inhabitants captive into Egypt. However, in consideration of the loyalty they

* It is supposed, that when Manasses fled to the Samaritans, he first brought the law of Moses among them; and after they received it they renounced idolatry, and worshipped the true God.—*Prideaux's Connection, Vol. II. p.* 598.

† Josephus, p. 284. Enfield's Philosophy.

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had on various occasions evinced to former conquerors, he advanced the most distinguished persons among them to places of trust in the military department; and eventually confirmed all the privileges which Alexander had formerly bestowed upon their nation. Ptolemy settled some of the captives in Lybia and Cyrene; from those who were established in the latter of these countries descended the Cyrenean Jews, mentioned by the writers of the New Testament.*

Soon after the recovery of Judea by Ptolemy, Simon, the Jewish high priest, died in the ninth year of his pontificate. The character given of him in Ecclesiasticus† evinces his distinguished merit; and the piety and integrity which uniformly marked his conduct induced his cotemporaries to honour him with the surname of *Just*. He exhibited an ardent love of his country by repairing and fortifying the city and temple; and is said to have rendered the most essential service to religion by completing the canon of the Old Testament. This celebrated pontiff was the last member of the grand synagogue.‡

* Prideaux's Connection, Vol. II. p. 150. Encyclopedia, Vol. IX.

† Ecclesiasticus, chap. l.

‡ The grand synagogue consisted of 120 elders who, in a regular succession after the expiration of the Babylonish captivity, laboured

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On the decease of Ptolemy Soter, his successor Philadelphus confirmed and enlarged the privileges of the Jews. He established many of that nation in his dominions, ransomed those who had been carried captive into Egypt, and caused a copy of their sacred books to be translated into the Greek language,* and deposited in his famous library at Alexandria. By means of the translation, which was styled the Septuagint version,† the Jewish religion was made known among the Gentiles, so that the temple was enriched with magnificent presents from the neighbouring monarchs.

The Jews also obtained distinguished favours from Seleucus Nicator, king of Macedon and Syria, who admitted them into all the cities which he had built in lesser Asia, and allowed

assiduously in restoring the Jewish church and state; and exerted themselves to diffuse an accurate knowledge of the holy scriptures among their brethren.—*Sacred Mirror.*

* This translation is frequently quoted by the sacred writers of the New Testament. The only instance in which the Jews before the birth of Christ appear to have used a *profane language* was in the Septuagint version of the Bible.—*Butler's Horæ Biblicæ.*

† A late author observes that, with respect to the history of the Septuagint, there scarcely is a subject of literature upon which more has been written, or of which less with any degree of certainty is known. The popular account of its being made in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus, at the suggestion of Aristeas, and under the direction of Demetrius Phalerus, by seventy or seventy two Jews shut up in cells, appears to be generally exploded. The prevailing opinion is, that it was made at Alexandria at different times, and by different interpreters, but that all of them were Jews.—*Butler's Horæ Biblicæ, p. 18, and also Prideaux's Connection, Vol. III. p. 29—52.*

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them the same privileges with his Grecian and Macedonian subjects.*

The Jewish affairs continued to wear a favourable aspect till in the reign of Ptolemy Philopator they were greatly oppressed by the incursion of the Samaritans. At the same time Antiochus the great, king of Syria, made a vigorous effort to conquer Judea. He was however defeated by the Egyptian monarch, who soon after visited Jerusalem, and offered sacrifices to the God of Israel for his recent victory. Stimulated by an extreme curiosity to view the interior part of the temple, in spite of the remonstrances of the priests and the lamentations of the people, he forced his way through the two outer courts; but it is related in the Maccabees, that on his attempting to penetrate into the most holy place he was struck with inexpressible terror, and was obliged to be carried out by his attendants. Instead however of being humbled by this judgment, he was exasperated against the Jews; and on his return to Egypt raised a persecution against those in that kingdom; deprived them of their privileges; ordered them to be enrolled among the lowest order of Egyptians, and sentenced many to slavery and death. The interposition

* Fleury's Ancient Israelites, p. 235.

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of heaven,* however, in a great measure frustrated the completion of his inhuman purposes, and obliged him to revoke his sanguinary decrees.

B. C. 212. After the death of Ptolemy Philopator, Antiochus the great invaded Cælosyria and Palestine, and soon made an entire conquest of these provinces. The Jews renounced their allegiance to Egpyt, placed themselves under his protection, and offered him their assistance. The Syrian monarch highly gratified by the fidelity and zeal they exhibited in his service, restored to Jerusalem its ancient privileges; gave a large sum out of his own treasury for repairing the temple, and maintaining publick worship; granted an exemption from all taxes for three years to all the dispersed Jews who should return to their capital, and liberated all who had been sold for slaves in any part of his dominions.†

* It is said, that the king had resolved to destroy the whole nation, beginning with those who resided in Egypt, whom he ordered to be brought in chains to Alexandria to be killed by his elephants. As this was to be done publickly, a vast concourse of people were collected together to behold the horrid exhibition, when to their great surprise the elephants having been made drunk with wine and frankincense, turned all their rage upon the spectators, and destroyed great numbers of them, while the Jews remained in perfect safety. The king relented, and restored this persecuted people to their former privileges.—*Prideaux's Connection, Vol. III. p.* 118. This learned author has taken the account from the 3d. book of Maccabees.

† Prideaux's Connection, Vol. II. p. 128.

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Upon the decease of Antiochus, his son and successor Seleucus continued to the Jews the enjoyment of their civil and religious privileges, and the expenses of their sacrifices were defrayed out of the royal treasury. Their prosperity was, however, disturbed by an unhappy altercation between Onias the high priest, and Simon the governour of the temple. The latter, actuated by a principle of revenge, gave such an exaggerated account of the treasures in the temple, that Seleucus determined to appropriate part of them to his own use, and commanded Heliodorus, his treasurer, to convey them to Antioch. Upon his arrival at Jerusalem, Onias endeavoured to dissuade him from his purpose, assuring him that these treasures were appropriated to the use of the widows and orphans in the Jewish community. Heliodorus, however, still persisted to execute his commission. But while the priests and people united in ardent supplication to the God of Israel to preserve the sanctuary, he was suddenly struck, according to the book of Maccabees, with inexpressible terrour by an awful vision, and soon after quitted the city, which he acknowledged was under the protection of a divine and irresistible power. Simon, enraged at the defeat of his malicious designs, accused Onias of having invited the B. C. 176.

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king's treasurer to Jerusalem. But the high priest justified his conduct to his royal master, and at length procured the banishment of the treacherous governour.*

B. C. 173. Soon after Antiochus Epiphanes assumed the Syrian diadem, Jason, brother to Onias, went to Antioch and purchased the high priesthood for three hundred and sixty talents.† He also obtained an order that the present pontiff, who was a man of exemplary piety and justice, should be sent to that metropolis, and there confined for life. This impious priest subverted the religion of his ancestors by procuring a grant for erecting a *Gymnasium* or place of exercise at Jerusalem, similar to those which were built in the Grecian cities; and encouraged the people by rewards, precepts and example, to adopt the superstition of their idolatrous conquerors. From this time, therefore, a general apostacy took place, and the service of the temple was neglected.‡

After Jason had enjoyed his ill acquired dignity for a few years, he was supplanted by his brother Menelaus, whose impiety if possible exceeded that of his predecessor. After he had obtained the high priesthood by offer-

* Josephus, p. 303. 2 Maccabees, iii. Prideaux's Connection.

† About ninety thousand pounds sterling.

‡ Josephus, p. 304. § 2 Maccabees.

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ing the additional price of three hundred talents, he ordered the sacred vessels to be sold to pay the stipulated sum, and bribe the courtiers in his favour. He also caused Onias, who had reproved him for his impious sacrilege, to be put to death. He was indefatigable in his exertions to destroy the Jewish religion; engaged that himself and his party should wholly conform to the Greeks; drove Jason from Jerusalem, and by his tyranny and extortion caused an insurrection in that city.*

In the mean time Antiochus was prosecuting the war in Egypt, and on a false report of his death, Jason marched to Jerusalem at the head of a thousand men, and severely chastised the adherents of Menelaus. But the approach of the Syrian monarch compelled him to elude his vengeance by flight; and at length he died in exile universally hated and despised. Antiochus, exasperated at the supposed revolt, and the rejoicings upon the report of his death, abandoned Jerusalem for three days to the fury of the Syrian army. Forty thousand persons were slain, and nearly an equal number sold for slaves. The impious monarch, conducted by the traitor Menelaus, forced his way into the temple, and even penetrated into the most holy place; tore off the golden ornaments, carried

B. C. 166.

* Josephus, p. 303. Prideaux's Connection, Vol. II. p. 175, 176.

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away the sacred treasures and utensils; and in order to offer the greatest insult to the Jewish religion sacrificed a large hog on the altar of burnt offering.*

After the capital was drained of treasure, and filled with blood, the tyrant appointed a barbarous Phrygian, named Philip, governour of Jerusalem, established the apostate Menelaus† in the high priesthood, and returned in triumph to Antioch.

B. C. 168. About two years after this terrible event, Antiochus despatched Appollonius, governour of Syria, at the head of twenty two thousand men, commanding him to destroy Jerusalem, massacre the men, and sell the women and children for slaves. The king's officer concealed his intentions till the first sabbath after his arrival; and while the people were assembled for the solemn worship of God, he executed his horrid commands with unrelenting barbarity. Every part of the city was then plundered, set on fire, and the walls demolished. The temple was indeed permitted to stand, but its service was totally abandoned; for the Syrian troops built a fortress opposite to the

* Josephus.

† The temporal authority which was united with the pontifical, made the office of high priest appear of such value to Menelaus and Jason.—*Prideaux, Vol. II. p.* 168.

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sacred edifice in order to overlook and assault all who came to worship the God of Israel.*

The impious monarch, not yet satiated with the blood of the Jews, resolved totally to abolish their religion, or extirpate their whole people. He therefore issued a decree, that all the nations within his dominions should forsake their old religion and gods, and worship those of the king, under the severest penalties. To enforce obedience to his orders, he placed overseers in every province, and being apprized that the Jews were the only persons who would presume to disobey his commands, strict injunctions were given to have them treated with the utmost severity. Atheneas, an old and cruel minister, well versed in all the rites of Grecian idolatry, being sent into Judea, dedicated the temple of Jehovah to Jupiter Olympus,† and set up his statue on the altar of burnt offering. All who refused to offer their adorations before the idol, were either massacred, or compelled to endure the most exquisite tortures. At the same time, altars, groves, and statues were established not only in Judea, but in all the parts of the Syrian empire; and all

* Rollin's Ancient History, Vol. VIII. p. 390.

† At this time the Samaritans presented a petition to the king, in which they declared themselves not to be Jews, and requested that their temple on Mount Gerizim might be dedicated to the Gresian Jupiter, and called after his name.—*Rollin's Ancient History.*

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who professed the religion of Moses, obliged to worship them under the same penalties. The king also promulgated an edict, making it instant death to offer sacrifices to the God of Israel, to observe the sabbath, practice circumcision, or any of the Mosaic institutions. In short, an energetick attempt was made to destroy every copy of the law, which the king commanded to be delivered up under penalty of death, while he strenuously endeavoured to exterminate every faithful worshipper of God.*

At this distressing period, multitudes quitted their habitations, and retreated to caves among the rocks, where they subsisted on herbs and roots. A large number apostatized; yet the ministers of cruelty were frequently baffled by the intrepid firmness of their victims. The king, exasperated at their boldness in defying his edicts and punishments, resolved to visit Jerusalem in order to enforce the execution of his sanguinary decrees. When the tyrant arrived, he had recourse to the stake and the rack; and commanded and superintended the most horrid executions.† The unshaken constancy of the sufferers filled him with rage and astonishment; while their triumphant

* Prideaux, Vol. II. p. 184, 187.

† The venerable Eleazar and the seven brethren, with their pious mother, were at this time put to a most cruel death.—*2 Maccabees* vi. vii.

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deaths strengthened the faith and courage of their brethren.

Though the persecution under Antiochus was the greatest the Jews had ever suffered, they had hitherto endured the horrid cruelties of the tyrant without resistance. But at length men eminently distinguished for valour and piety were raised up by divine providence to arm themselves in defence of their religion and laws; and while they fought under the banner of the God of Israel, they were enabled to effect the destruction of their idolatrous enemies, the deliverance of their nation, and the restoration of the true worship.

SECTION III.

Sketch of the history of the Jews under the Asmonean family.

MATTATHIAS, an eminent priest of the Asmonean family,* lamented with deep anguish and regret the wretched situation of his country, and had for some time retired to Modin, his native place, in order to avoid the persecution which raged in Jerusalem. Appelles, one of the officers of Antiochus, was sent to that city to establish the heathen worship. After

* He was the great grandson of Asmoneus, from whom the family derived their name.—*Prideaux's Connection, Vol II. p.* 187.

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assembling the people, he endeavoured to persuade that venerable priest to set an example of compliance with the king's edict, by insinuating compliments, magnificent promises, and by stating the number who had apostatized. Mattathias boldly replied in the hearing of the multitude, "that though all the Jews, and all the nations on earth, should conform to the king's decree, he and his sons would continue faithful to the law of their God; and that no consideration should ever induce them to abandon the religion of their ancestors." Immediately after, he killed one of his countrymen who offered sacrifices on the altar of Modin. Upon being joined by his sons, and some others, he executed the same summary vengeance on the king's officer and his attendants;* and hastily passing about the city, exhorted all who were zealous for the law of God to follow him.

Animated by the example of Mattathias and his pious family, large numbers of Jews being determined to make vigorous exertions for the recovery of their civil and religious privileges, followed their venerable leader into the desarts of Judea.† They were soon pursued by the

* Mattathias's conduct was conformable to the law of Moses in such cases. See Deuteronomy xiii.

† Whiston's Josephus, Vol. III. p. 46.

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royal army; and being attacked on the sabbath, many perished without offering to make the least resistance. Their leaders were hence induced to pass a decree for defending themselves for the future on that holy day, which being ratified by the priests and elders was privately communicated to Palestine and the adjacent villages.*

The party of Mattathias being strongly reinforced, furiously attacked the Syrians and apostate Jews, destroying many, and compelling others to seek refuge in foreign countries. After having struck their enemies with terrour, the conquerors marched from city to city, overturning the heathen altars, demolishing the graven images, opening the Jewish synagogues, and enforcing the practice of circumcision. They also assiduously employed themselves in searching for and transcribing the sacred books, and causing the reading of the scriptures to be resumed. Their heroick exertions were crowned with such remarkable success, that, in the short space of one year, a happy reformation had begun to extend over a large part of Judea, when death arrested Mattathias in his glorious progress. In his last moments he exhorted his sons in the most fervent and affectionate manner to emulate their B. C. 167.

* Whiston's Josephus, Vol. III. p. 46.

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pious ancestors, and hazard their lives in defence of the religion and laws of their country.*

B. C. 166. Judas, surnamed Maccabeus,† his eldest son and successor, is said to have been the greatest uninspired hero of whom the Jews can boast.‡ With his small army, which at first only consisted of six thousand men, he soon made himself master of some of the strongest fortresses in Judea; became terrible to the Syrians and Samaritans; compelled the apostate Jews to retire in confusion, while the pious emigrants returned and enlisted under his banners. The Syrian monarch, and the governours of the provinces, exerted themselves to the utmost to crush this dangerous revolt in its infancy. For this purpose they repeatedly sent formidable armies against Judas, commanded by officers of consummate valour. The Mac-

* 1 Maccabees ii. Josephus, p. 309.

† The motto on the standard of Judas was taken from Exodus xv. "Who is like unto thee among the Gods, O Jehovah!" which being written by an abbreviation formed the initial letters of the words put together, which made the artificial word Maccabees. Such at least is the national tradition concerning the origin of a name applied in its strict sense to persons enlisted under Judas and his brethren; but also more extensively to those who, before Judas raised his standard, had magnanimously braved death in the same religious cause. Particularly to those Jews recently tortured at Jerusalem by the merciless Antiochus Epiphanes, as well as those martyred 50 years before at Alexandria by the cruel Ptolemy Philopater.—*Prideaux's Connection, Vol. II. p.* 193. *Gillie's History, Vol. III. p.* 123.

‡ Encyclopedia.

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cabean hero, animated by religious confidence in God, was not alarmed by the vast superiority of numbers on the side of his enemies; but continued successfully to defend the laws and religion of his countrymen; and in one year defeated the Syrians in five battles. In the last of these engagements, the army which was raised by Lysias the Syrian governour, amounted to sixty five thousand men. Judas gained a complete victory, obliged the troops who had escaped the sword to elude his vengeance by an ignominious flight, and their commander to abandon the enterprize, and return to Syria.*

Encouraged by this brilliant success, the victorious Maccabees marched to Jerusalem, destroyed the Syrian idols, repaired and purified the temple, replaced the sacred vessels, and divine worship, which had been interrupted for three years and an half, was resumed with the greatest splendour and solemnity. The temple, which was decked with a profusion of ornaments, was consecrated anew to the service of God, and an annual feast appointed to perpetuate the remembrance of this joyful event. But notwithstanding the triumphant success of Judas and his army, they were not able to expel the Syrians from their fortress on mount B. C. 165.

* For a particular account of the battles between the Syrians and Jews see 1 Maccabees iii. iv.

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Acra, which was opposite to the temple; in order therefore to prevent the interruption of divine worship, they protected the sacred edifice by building high walls and lofty towers, which were supported by a powerful and vigilent garrison.*

The surrounding nations, exasperated at the reestablishment of the Jews, united against them, and attacked them on all sides, being resolved to destroy every worshipper of Jehovah. But Judas and his valiant brothers repeatedly attacked and vanquished their forces with prodigious slaughter; reduced several of their principal places; and obtained the most complete success.†

In the mean time Antiochus, being on his return from an unsuccessful expedition against Persia, received the alarming news, that all the Jews had revolted, defeated his generals, expelled their armies from Judea, and restored the primitive worship. This intelligence filled him with such frantick rage, that he declared he would utterly extirpate every individual of the Jewish nation. These words were scarcely uttered, says the author of the book of Maccabees, when he was struck with a torturing and incurable disease, and was compelled to acknowledge, that his sufferings were justly in-

* 1 Maccabees iv. † Rollin's Ancient History, Vol. viii.

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flicted by the God of Israel, whose people he had persecuted with unrelenting cruelty.

After having languished for some time in a miserable condition he expired, and his death freed the Jews from the most inveterate enemy they had ever known. Antiochus Eupator, his son and successor, continued to prosecute the war against the Jewish nation.*

Some time after the death of the tyrant, Judas laid close siege to the tower of Acra, which Appollonius had built to overlook the temple. The young king advanced to the relief of the garrison at the head of an hundred thousand foot, twenty thousand horse, thirty two elephants, and three hundred chariots of war. Upon the approach of this formidable army, the Maccabean chief having exhorted his troops to fight valiantly for their liberties, and given for the watchword, "*victory is of God*," attacked the enemy in the night, slew four thousand six hundred men, threw the whole army into confusion, and made a regular retreat to Jerusalem.†

Antiochus Eupator, having reduced the fortress of Bethsura, conducted his army to the Jewish metropolis. The garrison defended the city with undaunted courage, till they were reduced to the utmost extremities from want

* 2 Maccabees ix. Josephus, Vol. iii. p. 69. † Ibid.

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of provisions; but providence interposed in their behalf, and the report of a rebellion in Syria induced the besiegers to grant them an advantageous peace. The king engaged to leave the fortifications of the temple entire; but upon the cessation of hostilities he caused them to be demolished, in open violation of the treaty which he had just confirmed with the most solemn oath.*

Menelaus, the apostate high priest, who had attended the Syrian army in this expedition, was accused by Lysias, the commander, of being the instigator of the war, and condemned to suffer a cruel death. The Syrian government then conferred the pontifical dignity upon Alcimus, a man equally unprincipled and vicious as his predecessor. But the Jews refused to admit him to officiate at their altar on account of his known impiety and attachment to the superstition of the Grecians.†

B.C. 162. Onias, the son of Onias III. who was murdered in Antioch, being disappointed in not obtaining the high priesthood after the death of his uncle Menelaus, withdrew into Egypt. Indignant at the promotion of the unworthy Alcimus, he petitioned Ptolemy Philometer and Cleopatra his queen to permit him to build a temple for the Jews in that country,

* 1 Maccabees vi. 62. † 2 Maccab. xiii.

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alleging that the prophet Isaiah had foretold, that "there should be an *altar to the Lord in Egypt.*"* The king and queen granted his request, assigned a portion of land, and an adequate revenue for the purpose. The place chosen for erecting the temple was Hiliopolis, or the city of the sun. It was built after the model of the temple at Jerusalem; but not on so large and magnificent a scale. Onias was made high priest; inferior priests and levites were also appointed; and divine worship conducted as in the capital of Judea.†

Demetrius, son of Seleucus Philopater, and lawful heir to the crown, having put Antiochus Eupator to death, Alcimus, the apostate high priest, who upon being rejected by the Jews had become their implacable enemy, petitioned the new king to support his title. Demetrius, at his instigation, sent large armies under the command of Bacchides the governour of Mesopotamia, and Nicanor, governour of Judea. But the designs of both were fustrated by the valour and prudence of the Maccabees; and Nicanor, having blasphemed the God of Israel, and threatened to destroy the temple, was slain in the engagement, and his army defeated with prodigious slaughter.‡

Soon after this victory, Judas sent an em-

* Isaiah xix. 18, 19. † Josephus, Vol. iii. p. 59. ‡ Ibid.

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bassy to Rome, and obtained an alliance with that powerful state. But previously to the return of the ambassador, Demetrius despatched Bacchides into Judea with the flower of his troops, consisting of twenty two thousand men, to revenge the death of Nicanor, and establish Alcimus in the priesthood. At the approach of this formidable army, the soldiers of Judas, which amounted to only three thousand men, were intimidated to such a degree, that all left him except eight hundred. With this small force, which he exhorted in the most pathetick manner to die valiantly rather than desert, he broke the strongest wing of the idolatrous army, and chased the fleeing troops to Mount Azotus. But at length being surrounded on all sides, and overpowered by numbers, this heroick defender of his country fell, covered with honourable wounds, on heaps of his expiring enemies. His death was deeply lamented, and his heroick exploits deservedly celebrated.*

B. C. 160. The death of Judas filled his countrymen with the utmost consternation, while their enemies, inspired with fresh courage, reduced Jerusalem, put many of the adherents of the Maccabees to death, and reinstated Alcimus in the priesthood, which sacred office he per-

* 1 Maccabees ix.

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verted to the vilest purposes. Josephus observes, "that the calamities the Jews suffered at this time were equal to any they had experienced since their return from Babylon." But at length providence interposed in their behalf. The impious high priest having presumed to break down one of the walls of the sanctuary,* was suddenly cut off in the full career of his wickedness, and expired in agonies. The party of Judas made the most strenuous exertions against their enemies, and unanimously chose Jonathan to succeed his brother as their prince and general. Under his direction the war was conducted with such energy and success, that the Syrians, disturbed by their own intestine divisions, solemnly engaged to refrain from further hostilities, and a treaty of peace was concluded.†

Immediately after the Syrian forces left Judea, Jonathan commenced a regular government, similar to that of the ancient Israelitish judges; he repaired the walls of Jerusalem, fortified the city, and made several im-

* By the order of prophets Haggai and Zechariah, a low wall or inclosure was built round the sanctuary to separate the holy from the unholy; and the rule was, that within this no uncircumcised person was to enter. Alcimus, in order to give the Gentiles equal liberty with the Jews, to pass into the inner courts of the temple, ordered this wall of partition to be pulled down.—*Prideaux's Connection, Vol. ii. p.* 264.

† Ibid.

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portant reformations in the civil and ecclesiastical affairs of his country. The increase of his reputation and success, induced the competitors for the Syrian monarchy to court his friendship; and as Demetrius had formerly persecuted the Jews, he joined the party of his rival Alexander Bela. With the unanimous consent of the people, he accepted the high priesthood from him; that place having been vacant seven years from the death of Alcimus. Jonathan also formed an alliance with the Romans and Lacedemonians, and rendered himself formidable by his military atchievments. But after he had governed the Jewish nation with equal prudence and skill for about seventeen years, he and his children were treacherously put to death by Tryphon, a Syrian usurper, in the city of Ptolemais. One thousand persons who attended him as guards were likewise assassinated.*

B. C. 144.

B. C. 143.

After the death of Jonathan, the leaders of the Jewish nation assembled at Jerusalem, and chose Simon, the only surviving son of Mattathias, for their general and high priest; and settled both the civil and sacerdotal power on his posterity. He imitated the valour and prudence which marked the conduct of his brother; repaired the fortresses of Judea; re-

* Whiston's Josephus, Vol. V. p. 13. 1 Maccab. x. xi. xii. xiii. xiv.

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duced and demolished the tower of Acra; renewed the treaty with the Romans; and sent an embassy to Demetrius, lawful heir of Syria, offering to acknowledge his sovereignty, and assist him in depriving the usurper Tryphon of the regal dignity. These proposals were cheerfully accepted by Demetrius; and a letter was returned, which constituted Simon sovereign prince and high priest of the Jewish nation; ordered all publick acts to be made in his name, and released his territories from all foreign dominion. After the independent reign of Simon had commenced, he bravely defended his country; took Gaza and Joppa; restored peace to Jerusalem; beautified the sanctuary, and enforced obedience to the divine law. At length, however, a period was B. C. 135. put to his life and usefulness at the castle of his son-in-law, by whom he and two of his sons were treacherously murdered after he had governed the Jews eight years.*

Immediately after Simon's death Antiochus Sidetes, the then reigning king of Syria, marched to Palestine with a powerful army, and compelled the Jews to deliver their arms, demolish the fortifications of Jerusalem, and pay him an annual tribute. Not long after, this monarch was slain in an expedition against the Parthians; and the intestine commotions which

* 1 Maccabees xvi.

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distracted the kingdom after his death afforded Hyrcanus, the son and successor of Simon, an opportunity to enlarge his dominions, and deliver his country from the yoke of foreign power. His exertions were crowned with such complete success, that neither he nor his descendants were ever after subjected to the kings of Syria*

He was also successful in his wars with the Idumeans, whom he compelled to renounce their idolatrous rites, or abandon their country. In consequence of which, they lost their political existence, and became incorporated with the Jewish nation. The conqueror next turned his arms against the Samaritans; demolished their capital city, and the temple which was erected on Mount Gerizim.†

Hyrcanus renewed the alliance which his predecessors made with the Romans, who were now rapidly advancing to the meridian of their power. And having subdued his enemies, and amassed prodigious treasure by his conquests, enjoyed his authority without disturbance, made Judea flourish under his wise administration, and raised his nation to a greater degree of splendour than it had ever enjoyed since the Babylonish captivity. His last days were however embittered by a contest

* Whiston's Josephus, Vol. V. p. 14 .Prid. Conn. Vol. II. p. 325.
† Rollin's Ancient History.

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with the Pharisees,* who, at this time had acquired great power and popularity; and had incensed the king by calling in question his title to the high priesthood. Hyrcanus, however, after having enjoyed the royal authority twenty nine years, died in peace, greatly beloved and lamented by the generality of the Jewish nation.†

Aristobulus, his eldest son, succeeded him both in the regal and sacerdotal dignities. He was the first after the Babylonian captivity who assumed a diadem, and the title of king. The commencement of his reign was marked with several acts of despotick cruelty. He even put his own mother to death, because she aspired to the government; and imprisoned his

* Learned men differ respecting the origin of the Pharisees. Some suppose that they arose about an hundred and fifty years before the appearance of our Saviour. Josephus, who was himself of this sect, speaks of it as flourishing in the time of Jonathan the high priest. The dissentions between the schools of Hillel and Shammai, a little before the christian era, increased the number and power of the Pharisees. Hillel, having acquired a profound knowledge of the most difficult points of the Jewish law, became master of the chief school in Jerusalem, and laid the foundation of the Talmud. Shammai, one of his disciples, deserted his school, and formed a college, in which he taught doctrines contrary to his master. He rejected the oral law, and followed the moral only in its literal sense. These different schools long disturbed the Jewish church by violent commotions. However, the party of Hillel was at last victorous.—*Enfield's Philosophy. See also Section V. for a further account of this denomination.*

† Josephus, Vol. V. p. 19.

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brothers, one of whom he also caused to be slain upon an unjust suspicion. During his government the Itureans, who inhabited the north easterly parts of Galilee, were attacked and vanquished. After a short reign the tyrant expired, filled with the utmost horrour and remorse of conscience.*

B. C. 105. Alexander Janneus, brother of Aristobulus, being liberated from prison, ascended the throne. This martial prince defeated the Philistines, and compelled them to receive circumcision.† He also atchieved other brilliant conquests in Arabia, Gilead, and Moabitis. During his reign, however, the Jews were in a very miserable condition, being not only involved in foreign wars, but distracted by intestine commotions. The powerful party of the Pharisees, who detested him for enforcing his father's decrees against their constitutions, exerted themselves to the utmost to vilify his government, and exasperate the people against him. Their malicious attempts gave rise to a civil war which lasted six years, involved both parties in innumerable calamities, and occasioned the death of more than fifty thousand

* Josephus, Vol. V. p. 19.

† The practice of obliging the nations, who were conquered by the Jews to quit their country, or embrace the Mosaic religion, was invariably followed by the Asmonean princes.—*Rollin's Ancient History, Vol. IX. p.* 221.

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persons. At length Alexander having in vain endeavoured to effect a reconciliation, gained the victory in a decisive battle, and punished his enemies with the utmost severity. The king died in the 27th. year of his reign, after he had bequeathed the government to his wife Alexandria, whom he appointed guardian to the young princes.

When the queen ascended the throne, in compliance with the advice, which she received from her husband just before his death, she sent for the principal leaders among the Pharisees, to whom she entirely committed the management of her affairs. By this measure she acquired popularity, and established herself on the throne. But this turbulent sect having compelled the queen to grant their exorbitant demands, commenced a violent persecution against the Sadducees,* and exercised their authority in the most arbitrary and oppressive manner. Alexandria died in the ninth year of her reign, having appointed her eldest son Hyr-

* The Sadducees derived their origin and name from one Sadoc, who flourished about two hundred and sixty years before Christ. Sadoc was a pupil of Antigonus Sochaeus, president of the sanhedrim, who having inculcated in his lectures, that men ought to serve God out of pure love to him, and not in a servile manner, either for fear of punishment or hope of reward, Sadoc, not understanding this spiritual doctrine, concluded that there was no future state of rewards and punishments. His adherents were denominated Sadducees.—*Jenning's Lectures, Vol. I. p.* 456. See part V. for a farther account of this sect.

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canus, who had been made high priest, to succeed her in the regal dignity.*

Immediately after Hyrcanus II. ascended the throne, his brother Aristobulus raised a powerful army against him, which soon compelled him to sue for peace, on condition of resigning all title to the regal and pontifical dignity. But the ambition of Antipater, governour of Idumea and father of Herod, involved the Jews in a new war. He used all his address to replace the late king on the throne, in order that he might govern under him. By his assistance, and that of Aretas king of Arabia, Hyrcanus assembled a body of troops, which defeated Aristobulus, and kept him closely besieged in Jerusalem.†

B. C. 65. In this situation of affairs, Aristobulus implored the protection of the Romans, and his petition, being accompanied with large presents, effectually answered his purpose, and induced the republick to write to Aretas, commanding him to raise the siege, and leave the country. The Arabian prince obeyed the injunction, and Aristobulus escaped from his confinement, and gratified his vindictive rage by the destruction of his enemies.‡

Some time after this event, the two brothers sent embassadors to Pompey, at that time

* Josephus, Vol. V. p. 26. † Josephus, Vol. I. p. 28. ‡ Ibid.

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commander in chief of all the Roman forces in the east, and chose him the arbitrator of their mutual differences.

The Roman general heard each party with apparent impartiality, and dismissed them with a promise, that he would embrace an early opportunity of deciding the controversy. Aristobulus, offended at the delay, and suspecting Pompey favoured his brother, made formidable preparations for war. Exasperated at this, and other parts of his conduct, the Roman commander caused him to be imprisoned, and marched with his whole army against Jerusalem.*

Though the gates of the city were readily opened by Hyrcanus's party, yet the faction of Aristobulus took shelter in the temple, and resolved to defend themselves to the last extremity. Pompey therefore closely besieged them; and the superstitious rigour, with which the Jews observed the sabbath, facilitated the conquest of their metropolis. For though, since the commencement of the Maccabean war, they had agreed to defend themselves on that holy day, when actually attacked, they still thought it unlawful to prevent the works of the enemy. The Romans therefore were unmolested, while they employed themselves in preparations for

* Josephus, Vol V. p. 30.

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an attack on the sabbath, and made themselves masters of the city after a siege of three months. A terrible slaughter ensued, in which more than twelve thousand persons were killed, and many perished by suicide. During these horrid transactions, the priests, who were offering sacrifices, continued their devotions with great composure, and suffered themselves to be murdered before the altar without any resistance. Their constancy excited the astonishment and admiration of the conqueror.*

Jerusalem was reduced on that very day, which the Jews observe as a solemn fast for the taking of the city and temple by Nebuchadnezzar. After Pompey had completed the conquest of Jerusalem, his curiosity induced him to examine every part of the temple. Accompanied with some of his superiour officers, he even penetrated into the holy of holies. But he left the treasures of the sacred edifice untouched, and ordered the priests to make a solemn purification, and offer sacrifices according to the Mosaic institutions.†

* Rollin's Ancient History, Vol. IV. p. 293.

† Josephus, Vol. V. p. 31—33.

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SECTION IV.

Sketch of the history of the Jews from the conquest of Pompey to the birth of Jesus Christ.

JOSEPHUS and Tacitus date the loss of the liberty of the Jews, and the translation of the sovereign authority to the Romans, from the reduction of Jerusalem by Pompey. For though Hyrcanus was restored to the pontifical dignity with the title of prince, he was deprived of the ensigns of royalty, and condemned to pay a disgraceful tribute. His dominions were also reduced to narrower limits; for Pompey restored to Cœlo Syria all the towns taken by the Jews, gave liberty to Samaria and other maritime towns, and strictly prohibited him from attempting any new conquests. To prevent future revolts, the Roman general commanded the walls of Jerusalem to be demolished; and, after regulating the government of Judea according to his pleasure, returned to Rome, Aristobulus and his sons Alexander and Antigonus being sent prisoners to that city to adorn his future triumph.* B. C. 63.

From this period for many years civil dissentions and desolating wars raged in Judea. Alexander, the son of Aristobulus, found means B. C. 57.

* Josephus, Vol. V. p. 34.

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to escape from Rome, and appeared in that country at the head of a formidable army. Hyrcanus had left the management of affairs to Antipater, who, having used every artifice to ingratiate himself with the Romans, was enabled, by their assistance, to suppress the rebellion. Some time after, Aristobulus obtained his liberty, and joined the discontented party in Palestine. But his attempts were frustrated; and he was again committed to prison. A few years after, Julius Cæsar set him at liberty, in order to gain his assistance against Pompey; and both he and his son Alexander were put to death by the partizans of that famous general.*

B. C. 52. About this time Crassus, the Roman governour of Syria, invaded the Parthians; and on his march against that nation stopped at Jerusalem, and stimulated by his insatiable avarice, seized the sacred treasures in the temple. The wealth he acquired by this sacrilegious pillage is said to have been upwards of two millions sterling. But the vengeance of heaven overtook him; for he was soon after defeated and slain by the Parthians.†

B.C. 48. Meantime the power and influence of Antipater rapidly increased. Julius Cæsar, who after the death of Pompey usurped the supreme

* Josephus, Vol. V. p. 37—40. † Ibid.

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authority at Rome, rewarded the services he had rendered him in the Egyptian war, by making him lieutenant of Judea, and honouring him with the title of a Roman citizen. He also confirmed Hyrcanus in the priesthood, gave liberty to fortify the city and repair the walls of Jerusalem, which Pompey had demolished, and bestowed such signal favours upon the Jews, that during his life, they could scarcely be said to feel the Roman yoke.

At this time Antipater procured the government of Jerusalem for his eldest son Phasael, and that of Galilee for his second son Herod.*

During the domestick calamities, which engaged the attention of the Romans upon the assassination of Julius Cæsar, Hyrcanus was deprived of his authority by his nephew Antigonus, who, after making vigorous efforts, in which he was assisted by the Parthians, recovered the kingdom. Hyrcanus and Phasael were thrown into a dungeon; but Herod escaped destruction by a precipitate flight. He first took refuge in Egypt, from whence he repaired to Rome for assistance, and by the powerful patronage of Mark Anthony, who was then in the zenith of his power, was inaugurated king of Judea. Soon after he entered Palestine with a numerous army, and subdued Gal-

* Josephus, Vol. V. p. 43.

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ilee. He was however repulsed at Jerusalem with great slaughter; but being reinforced by Sosias, governour of Syria, he made himself master of the city after an obstinate siege of six months. The immediate consequence was a cruel pillage and massacre, which was followed by the death of Antigonus the son of Aristobulus. Thus ended the reign of the Asmonean family, after a duration of an hundred and twenty nine years from the beginning of the government of Judas Maccabeus.*

Upon the entire reduction of the holy city Herod, a stranger and Idumean, ascended the throne of Judea. This extraordinary, and till then unexampled event, indicated that the *sceptre was departing* FROM JUDAH;† and announced the appearance of him to WHOM THE GATHERING OF THE PEOPLE SHOULD BE; and whose manifestation was the perpetual object of the views and hopes of the Jewish nation.‡

Herod, who proved one of the greatest tyrants ever recorded in history, commenced his reign with a cruel persecution of the adherents of Antigonus; the most affluent among them

* Josephus, Vol. V. p. 43.

† See the celebrated prophecy of Jacob, Genesis xlix. The generality of interpreters, Jewish as well as Christians, have by Shiloh always understood the Messiah.

‡ Rollin's Ancient History, Vol. IX. p. 302.

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he caused to be put to death, and confiscated their estates in order to replenish his empty coffers. The tyrant decoyed Hyrcanus from Parthia, where he had fled for shelter; and, contrary to the most solemn engagements caused him to be assassinated. Aristobulus, the grandson of Hyrcanus, who was appointed high priest, was drowned in a bath by his contrivance. Mariamne, his queen, who descended from the illustrious Asmonean family, and was distinguished for her beauty, virtue and accomplishments, fell the next victim to his resentment and jealousy. Three of his sons, in the course of his tyrannical reign, were condemned to suffer death. He sacrificed his friends as well as foes to his ungovernable fury, oppressed the people in the most cruel and arbitrary manner, and exhausted the treasures of the nation by his boundless extravagance.*

After Herod had destroyed the greatest part of his supposed enemies, he began to exhibit a marked contempt for the Jewish religion and laws. From the beginning of his reign to the final destruction of the temple, the high priests had no hereditary right; but were set up and removed at his pleasure, and that of his successors. He also destroyed the authority

* Josephus.

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of the grand sanhedrim,* and burnt the Jewish records, that he might be thought originally an Israelite. He built temples in the Grecian taste, erected statues for idolatrous worship, consecrated a superb theatre and amphitheatre, to celebrate games in honour of Augustus, adopted in his ordinary habits Roman manners and usages, and in his publick capacity was absolutely devoted and subservient to the Romans.

Under the administration, and through the influence of this tyrant, the Roman luxury was introduced into Palestine, accompanied with all the vices of that licentious people. In a word, Judea, governed by Herod, groaned under all the corruption, which might be expected from the authority and example of a prince, who, though a Jew in outward profession, was, in point of morals and practice, a contemner of all laws human and divine.†

B.C. 23. After Herod had amassed a prodigious treasure by his cruel extortions and confiscations, he proposed to regain the favour of the Jewish nation by rebuilding the temple; and for eight or nine years employed upon it

* Herod had been obliged to appear before the grand sanhedrim, in order to answer for his conduct, previously to his obtaining the regal dignity; and from a principle of revenge he attacked the assembly, which by degrees lost its power.

† Mosheim's Eccles. Hist. Vol. I. p. 31. Horæ Biblicæ.

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eighteen thousand workmen, who at last completed the stupendous design. The magnificent structure, which he erected, is said, in some respects, to have even exceeded the first temple, which was built by Solomon.* Rising in all its grandeur from the summit of a mountain, it commanded an extensive prospect; its appearance, says Josephus, exhibited every thing, that could strike the mind and astonish the sight. It was on every side covered with solid plates of gold, and, when the sun arose upon it, reflected such a dazzling effulgence, that the eye was unable to sustain its radiance. The temple was encompassed with august porticoes, on which immense riches were profusely expended; and every ornament bestowed, that human art and genius could devise. This superb structure was continually receiving additions to the time of the ministry of our Saviour.† Herod set up a golden eagle of exquisite workmanship, the arms of the Roman empire, over the gates of the temple.

* It was built of hard white stones of prodigious magnitude. Hence, when our Saviour was sitting upon the mount of Olives, and the temple in full prospect before him, the disciples expressed their admiration of its grandeur, and of the large and magnificent stones, of which it was erected, Mark xiii. 1.—*See Harwood's Introduction to the New Testament, Vol. II. p.* 158.

† Hence the Jews might with literal propriety assert, as they ostentatiously did, "Forty and six years was the temple in building," John xi. 20. As the whole was executed under the idea of repairs, it continued to be called the second temple.

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About this period there was a general expectation through the eastern world of the advent of some illustrious prophet and deliverer, who should change the aspect of human affairs.* The Jews in particular eagerly anticipated the coming of the promised Messiah, as the time predicted by Daniel for his manifestation was arrived. Devout persons waited day and night for the consolation of Israel; and the whole nation, groaning under the Roman yoke, and stimuluted by the desire of liberty or of vengeance, expected their deliverer with the most anxious impatience.

At length, that most interesting and important epoch arrived, when Jesus Christ made his appearance on earth. When the sun of righteousness arose on a benighted world, Polytheism was in every country, except Judea, the predominant, and almost universal religion. The Roman empire under Augustus had attained the zenith of its power; while the Pagan nations, who composed this vast monarchy, exhibited the most glaring picture of human depravity; and the Jewish state and true religion were almost at the lowest ebb. Just before our Saviour was born, the temple of Janus was shut, to intimate that all the nations

* Josephus, Suetonius and Tacitus mention this general expectation; and hence Virgil, the Roman poet, in his fourth eclogue describes the blessings of the government of some great personage who was, or should be born about this time.

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of the earth were at peace. This remarkable peace, after so many ages of tumult and war, was a fit prelude to the introduction of the glorious prince of peace into the world.*

The malicious attempt of Herod to involve the Saviour of the world in the slaughter of the babes of Bethlehem is recorded by the sacred history.† The tyrant died the following year in exquisite tortures. During his illness he sent for the heads of the most eminent families in Judea, confined them, and left orders, that, as soon as he had breathed his last, they should all be put to the sword, to oblige the nation to go in mourning at his death. He expired soon after, in the thirty-seventh year of his reign; the sentence was not executed; and the nation rejoiced at their deliverance.‡

After the death of Herod, the Roman emperour divided the kingdom of Judea between his sons. The brothers, for some years, governed Palestine without any open rebellion or disturbance. But Archelaus, who obtained half the kingdom, under the title of exarch, proved so corrupt and wicked a prince, that both Jews and Samaritans sent ambassadours to accuse him to Augustus. The emperour deposed and banished him for his tyrannical conduct; and reduced Judea to the form of a

* Mosheim's Eccles. History, Vol. 1. p. 16.
† Matthew xi. ‡ Josephus, Vol. V. p. 154.

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Roman province, to be ruled by procurators, who were to be appointed and recalled at the pleasure of the reigning monarch. The power of life and death was taken from the Jews; their taxes were regularly gathered by the publicans; and justice was from that time administered in the name, and by the laws of Rome.*

SECTION V.

Of the different denominations among the Jews at the time of Christ's appearance upon earth.

THOUGH the Jewish nation at the time of our Saviour's appearance retained the worship of the true God, they had grossly perverted their religion, by exalting the traditions of their ancestors above the clear and positive injunctions of their law; and while they presumed to infringe the strongest moral obligations, they were scrupulously exact in performing the most minute and trifling ceremonies, which were enjoined by their rabbies. The ultimate object of many, was to obtain popular applause; hence they publickly displayed all the parade of ostentatious charity, and were privately guilty of the greatest extortion and cruelty. Yet,

* The precise year, when this event took place, it may be difficult to ascertain; but the judicial forms which were observed on the trial and condemnation of our Saviour, and the acclamation of the Jews, "we have no king but Cæsar," irrefragably shew that it had arrived.—*Horæ Biblicæ, p.* 42.

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elated with spiritual pride, they considered themselves as the only favourites of heaven, and excluded all other nations from the hopes of eternal life.*

During Christ's ministry on earth the temple was used as a place of merchandize, and the most sacred offices, even the high priesthood, were sold. The chief priests, who purchased their places by bribes, maintained their ill acquired authority by the most abominable crimes. The inferiour priests, and those who possessed any degree of authority, had become dissolute and abandoned in the highest degree; while the multitude, excited by their corrupt example, run headlong into every kind of iniquity; and, by their endless seditions, robberies, and extortions, armed against themselves both the justice of God and vengeance of man.

The Jewish nation, at the time of our Saviour's appearance, were divided into a great variety of sects. The principal points in dispute among them respected the law of Moses, the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, future rewards and punishments, and the nature of virtue. All admitted the divine authority of the Mosaical law. All agreed in thinking, that their religious tenets and observ-

* Harwood's Introduction, Vol. I. p. 108—109. Mosheim.

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ances were the only objects worthy of their attention.*

The rabbies, or the teachers of each sect, defended their tenets with the greatest zeal and pertinacity. The Jews and Samaritans were, in particular, violently opposed to each other. The latter, at first, were heathens, who worshipped the God of Israel, in conjunction with other deities, till Menasses, who was made their high priest, with other fugitive Jews, coming to them from Jerusalem, brought with them the book of the law, and taught them to worship the true God only, according to the Mosaic institution. From this period they are considered a sect of the Jewish religion. They looked upon the temple of Gerizim as the only place, where God is pleased to be worshipped, and the centre of true religion. They received no other scriptures but the book of Moses, except Joshua and Judges, which, however, they did not allow to be of divine authority like the Pentateuch.†

The Pharisees were the most distinguished, flourishing, and popular sect among the Jews. They assumed this name on account of their separating themselves for superiour strictness in ritual observances. Their separation con-

* Prideaux's Connection, Vol. I. p. 353. Horæ Biblicæ.

† Basnage, p. 115.

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sisted chiefly in certain distinctions respecting religious ceremonies, and does not appear to have interrupted the uniformity of religious worship, in which the Jews of every sect always seemed to have been united.*

It appears from the frequent mention, which is made by the evangelists, of the Scribes and Pharisees in conjunction, that the greatest number of Jewish teachers, or doctors of the law, were at that time of the pharisaical sect. The ecclesiastical scribes were the learned of the Jewish nation, who expounded the law, and taught it to the people.†

The Pharisees were principally distinguished by their zeal for the traditions of the elders, which they not only maintained to be of equal authority with the written law, but in many cases explained the former by the latter, entirely contrary to its true intent and meaning; and thus made the *commandments of God of no effect by their traditions.* They pretended that those traditions, which they called the oral law, were delivered by God to Moses, on Mount Sinai, and preserved through successive generations. They were charged with maintaining, that by observing both the written and oral law, man may not only obtain justification before God, but perform meritorious

* Jennings' Jewish Antiquities, Vol. I. p. 437. † Ibid, p. 392.

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works of supererogation; that fasting, alms, ablutions, and confessions are sufficient atonement for sin; that thoughts and desires are not sinful, unless they produce evil actions. They acknowledged the immortality of the soul, future rewards and punishments, and the resurrection of the body.* According to Josephus, they maintained the doctrine of predestination; but supposed, that the divine decrees did not interfere with the freedom of the human will.†

This denomination, by their apparent sanctity of manners, had rendered themselves extremely popular. It appears both from the scripture, and the testimony of Josephus, that the common people were entirely at their disposal, and gave their suffrage to every religious

* Dr. Prideaux supposes that the Pharisees maintained only a Pythagorean resurrection, that is, the transmigration of the soul into another body. David Levi, on the other hand, asserts, that the Pharisees knew and taught the true resurrection of the body and soul together. For proof of this, he quotes Ezekiel xxxvii, and other passages in the Old Testament. Whence he asserts, that "the doctrine of the resurrection, and consequently, that of a future state of rewards and punishments, was well known and established in the Jewish nation, (and that in the most clear, explicit, and unequivocal manner) for almost a thousand years before Christ."—*David Levi's Ceremonies of the Jews, p. 255 to p. 261.*

† They maintained, that, "before a man is born, it is predestinated, whether he shall be wise or foolish, weak or strong, rich or poor. But whether he is to be wicked or righteous, vicious or virtuous, is entirely in his own free will."—*David Levi's Ceremonies of the Jews, p. 267.*

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prescription and judicial sentence, that had obtained their sanction. The great, who feared their artifice, were frequently obliged to court their favour. Hence they obtained the highest offices both in the state and priesthood; and assumed the chief direction both of publick and private affairs.*

The peculiar manners of this sect are strongly marked in the writings of the evangelists; particularly their exactness in performing the rites and ceremonies of the law, both written and traditionary; the rigour of their discipline in washings, fastings, and ablutions; their scrupulous care to avoid every kind of ritual impurity; their long and frequent prayers, made not only in the synagogues and temples, but in the publick streets; their philacteries on the borders of their garments, on which were written sentences of the law; their assiduity in making proselytes; their ostentatious charities; and, under all this specious mark of zeal and purity, their abominable and atrocious vices. According to our Saviour's representation of them, they were a race of the most demure hypocrites, that ever disgraced human nature, resembling whited sepulchres, which outwardly appear beautiful, but inwardly are full of putrefaction and horrour.†

* Josephus. † Harwood's Introduction.

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The above account is confirmed by the testimony of the Jewish writers themselves. The Talmudic books mention several distinct classes of Pharisees, under characters, which show them to have been deeply immersed in superstition. Among these were the truncated Pharisee, who, that he might appear in profound meditation, as if destitute of feet, scarcely lifted them from the ground. The mortar Pharisee, who, that his contemplations might not be disturbed, wore a deep cap in shape of a mortar, which would only permit him to look upon the ground at his feet; and the striking Pharisee, who, shutting his eyes, as he walked, to avoid the sight of women, often struck his head against the wall. They practised many painful austerities and mortifications, frequently observed severe fasts, covered their features with gloom and solemnity, and used every artifice to captivate the admiration of the populace.*

The sect of the Sadducees was inconsiderable in number; but some of those, who professed its tenets, were of illustrious families, and others distinguished for their opulence. We find that Caiaphus an high priest was of this denomination, and Josephus mentions several other Sadducees, who were exalted to

* Godwin's Jewish Antiq. p. 45. Enfield's Philos. Vol. II. p. 181.

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the supreme power in church and state. The chief heads of the doctrine of this sect are as follow.

All laws and traditions not comprehended in the written law, are to be rejected as merely human inventions. Neither angels nor spirits have a distinct existence, separate from this corporeal vestment. The soul of man therefore does not remain after this life, but expires with the body. There will be no resurrection of the dead, nor any rewards and punishments after this life. Man is not subject to irresistible fate, but has the framing of his condition chiefly in his own power. Polygamy ought not to be practised.*

The sect of the Caraites, though its history be exceedingly obscure, is not to be confounded with that of the Sadducees. The name denotes a scripturist, and seems intended to distinguish those, who adhere to the scriptures as the whole and only rule of their faith and practice. This denomination was given them about thirty years before Christ, when, upon the dissension betwixt Hillel the president of the Sanhedrim, and Shammai the vice president, by which their respective pupils were divided into two parties, betwixt whom there were perpetual contests, those, that were of the opinion

* Josephus. Enfield's Philosophy.

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of the Caraites, sided with the school of Shammai, and those, who were zealous for traditions, with that of Hillel. According to Dr. Prideaux they did not absolutely reject all traditions, but only refused them the same authority with the written oracles of God. They were distinguished from the Sadducees, by maintaining the doctrines of the immortality of the soul, and future rewards and punishments.*

The Essenes differed from all the above mentioned sects, as they secluded themselves not only from politicks and publick affairs, but, as much as the nature of man and constitution of society will admit, from the common concerns and intercourse of private life. Some suppose they took their rise from the dispersion of their nation, after the Babylonish captivity; others, that they began when the persecution of Antiochus compelled the Jews to retire to the woods and mountains. They maintained, that rewards and punishments extended to the soul alone, and regarded the body as a mass of malignant matter, and the prison of the immortal spirit. The greatest part of this sect considered the laws of Moses as an allegorical system of spiritual and mysterious truth, and renounced all regard to the outward letter in its explanation. The lead-

* Prid. Conn. Vol. II. p. 388. Jenning's Lectures, Vol. I. p. 433

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ing traits in the character of this sect were, that they were sober, abstemious, peaceable, lovers of retirement, and had a perfect community of goods. They paid the highest regard to the moral precepts of the law; but neglected the ceremonial, excepting what regarded personal cleanliness, the observation of the sabbath, and making an annual present to the temple at Jerusalem. They commonly lived in a state of celibacy, and adopted the children of others, to educate them in their own principles and customs. Though they were, in general, averse to swearing, or to requiring an oath, they bound all, whom they initiated, by the most sacred vows, to observe the duties of piety, justice, fidelity, and modesty; to conceal the secrets of the fratenity; to preserve the books of their institutions; and with great care to commemorate the names of the angels.*

Philo mentions two classes of Essenes; one of which followed a practical institution, the other professed a theoretical system. The latter, who were called Theraputæ, placed their whole felicity in the contemplation of the divine nature. Detaching themselves entirely from secular affairs, they transferred their property to their relations and friends, and re-

* Enfield, Vol. II. p. 186. Jennings' Lectures, Vol. I. p. 170.

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tired to solitary places, where they devoted themselves to an holy life. The principal society of this kind was formed near Alexandria, where they lived, not far from each other, in separate cottages, each of which had its own sacred apartments, to which the inhabitants retired for the purposes of devotion.*

Besides these eminent Jewish sects, there were several of inferior note, at the time of Christ's appearance; the Herodians, mentioned by the sacred writers, and the Gaulonites, by Josephus.

The Herodians derived their name from Herod the great, and were distinguished by their coinciding with the plan of that monarch to subject himself and his dominions to the Romans; and also by complying with many of the heathen usages. Their distinguished tenet appeared to be, that it is lawful, when constrained by superiours, to comply with idolatry, and with false religion. Herod seems to have formed this sect, in order to justify himself in his practice in studying every artifice to ingratiate himself with the emperour, and to secure the favour of the principal personages in the court of Rome. We find the Sadducees readily embraced the tenets of this party; for the same persons, who, in one of

* Enfield, Vol. II. p. 186.

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the gospels, are called Herodians, are in another styled Sadducees. The Herodians were not so much a religious, as a political sect, attached to Herod during his life, and to his sons after his decease.*

The Gaulonites were Galileans, who derived this name from one Judas Theudas, a native of Gaulon, in upper Galilee, who, in the tenth year of Jesus Christ, excited his countrymen, the Galileans, and many other Jews, to take arms, and venture, upon all extremities, rather than pay tribute to the Romans. The principles he instilled into his party were, not only that they were a free nation, and ought not to be in subjection to any other; but, that they were the elect of God, that he alone was their governour, and that therefore they ought not to submit to any ordinance of man. Though Theudas was unsuccessful, and his party, in their very first attempt, entirely routed and dispersed; yet so deeply had he infused his own enthusiasm into their hearts, that they never rested, till they involved the city and temple in their own destruction.†

Many of the Jews were attached to the oriental philosophy concerning the origin of the world. From this source the doctrine of the Cabala is supposed to be derived. That con-

* Josephus. Prideaux's Connection. † Josephus.

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siderable numbers of the Jews had imbibed this system, appears evident, both from the books of the New Testament, and from the ancient history of the christian church. It is also certain, that many of the Gnostic sects were founded by Jews.*

At the time when Jesus Christ appeared upon earth, the great body of the Jewish nation were waiting with great anxiety for their promised Messiah. Yet they formed erroneous ideas of his character. Corrupted by their increasing intercourse with the world, and dazzled with the splendour of the Roman viceroys, they expected not an eternal and spiritual, but a temporal and earth born sovereign. They supposed he would manifest himself as a mighty conqueror, free them from subjection to the Romans, aggrandize their nation, render Jerusalem the metropolis of the world; and, after subduing all their enemies, commence a glorious reign of prosperity and peace. Hence they were disgusted with the humble appearance of the divine Redeemer; while the Pharisees and great men were exasperated at the boldness and severity of his rebukes. For though he united in himself the accomplishment of every ancient prophecy, he was ignominiously rejected and put to death

* Mosheim's Eccles. Hist. Vol. I. p. 38.

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by the Jewish nation. The tremendous calamities which befell them after perpetrating this horrid crime; the fulfilment of our Saviour's predictions, respecting the destruction of their city and temple, and their consequent dispersion and sufferings will be related in the following pages.

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HISTORY OF THE JEWS.

CHAPTER I.

Tyranny of the Roman government in Judea. Herod Agrippa made king. The emperour Caligula attempts to have his statue placed in the temple of Jerusalem. Resistance of the Jews. Death of Herod Agrippa. Arbitrary conduct of the Roman governours. Many Jews depart for foreign countries. Number of Jews in Jerusalem at the Passover. The prodigies which preceded the war. Of the contest respecting the city of Cesaria. Jews and Syrians take up arms. Vast numbers destroyed on both sides. The Jews take several important fortresses. Cestius Gallus marches against them and besieges Jerusalem. The Christians retire to Pella. Jews make great preparations for war. Vespasian is sent against them with a powerful army. He reduces the cities of Galilee. Of the parties among the Jews. Of the civil war in Jerusalem; and the cruelty of the zealots. Vespasian is proclaimed emperour, and sends his son Titus to terminate the war by the reduction of Jerusalem.

THE ministry of our blessed Saviour while he remained on earth, was principally confined to the Jews; and notwithstanding the obstinate incredulity of the majority of the nation, who, impatient under the tyrannical government of the Romans, eagerly expected a temporal deliverer, a large number acknowledged him as the true Messiah. The apostles, also, in obedience to the command of their divine master, began to preach the gospel to

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this distinguished people. Under their ministry many were converted, and the first christian church was founded at Jerusalem. But the unbelieving Jews, who had rejected and crucified the *Prince of Life*, exhibited the same enmity against his apostles and followers, and, in the infancy of the christian church, they were its most cruel persecutors.* The most signal marks of divine vengeance, however, soon pursued this infatuated people; and the predictions of the Divine Redeemer, respecting the tremendous destruction of Jerusalem, began to be accomplished.

The governours of Judea, appointed by the Romans, constantly insulted the feelings of the Jews, by exhibiting a marked contempt for their religion and law. Pontius Pilate, during his administration, took every occasion of introducing his standards, with images, pictures, consecrated shields, &c. into their city; and at length attempted to drain the treasury of the temple, under pretence of bringing an aqueduct to Jerusalem. Seven years after the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, complaint being made of the tyranny and rapine of Pilate, he

* The early ecclesiastical historians, as well as the New Testament writers, attest the enmity of the Jews against the Christians, and, that they were more particularly exasperated against those believers, who were of their own nation.

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was superceded, and, in extreme poverty and misery, perished by suicide.*

Soon after, Herod Agrippa, grandson to Herod the great, was promoted to the regal dignity; and, during his reign, the Jews were involved in new difficulties. The Roman emperour, Caligula, intoxicated with mad ambition, claimed divine honours; and, being determined to have his statue placed in the sanctuary of the temple, ordered Petronius, the governour, to raise an army to enforce obedience to his impious injunction. At this alarming period, the Jews went in a large body to the governour, beseeching him in the most pathetick terms not to defile their temple with images; and, falling prostrate on the ground, offered to die rather than disobey their law.† Their moving entreaties excited the compassion of Petronius, and he engaged to interest himself in their behalf. At length Agrippa, who was in high favour at court, undertook their cause; and, upon the emperour's solemnly engaging to grant whatever he should ask, he, generously preferring the welfare of his people to his own emolument, requested the monarch to relinquish the design of having his statue erected in the temple. Caligula reluctantly granted his suit; and the death of the

* Josephus, Vol. V. † Josephus, Vol. V. p. 172—173.

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tyrant, which took place soon after, prevented his renewing the impious attempt.*

According to the sacred historian,† Agrippa, upon his entrance into Judea, who, from an ambitious desire of popularity among his countrymen, raised a persecution against the christians, and blasphemously suffered himself to be styled a God by some deputies from Tyre and Sydon, was miraculously struck with a terrible disease, which soon put an end to his life. After his death Judea was again reduced to a Roman province, and the new governours appointed over it were continually irritating the minds of the people by the most glaring infringements upon their privileges.‡

Felix, who had advanced from obscurity and servitude to rank and power, with the true spirit of a slave, exercised the tyranny of an eastern prince.§ His oppression, rapine, and cruelty, excited a spirit of revolt; while the false prophets (who were so numerous under his government, that some of them were apprehended and killed every day) were continually blowing the flames of sedition. The people were massacred by the troops of Felix for following these deceivers, who, according to our Saviour's prediction, drew multi-

* Josephus, Vol. V. p. 172–173. † Acts v.

‡ Josephus' Wars of the Jews, Vol. V. p. 184. § Tacitus.

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tudes into the desart to shew them signs and wonders. In particular, a certain Egyptian Jew, entered Judea with a numerous banditti, and, having collected about thirty thousand men, led them to Mount Olivet, and promised to deliver them from the Romans. Felix, with his legions, met him at the foot of the mountain, slew many of his followers, and took others prisoners. The impostor, with a remnant of his adherents, made their escape.*

Judea, during the government of Felix, was infested with robbers, and clandestine assassins, named Sicarii, who, with poignards, concealed under their garments, used to mingle in the crowd, and stab their supposed enemies.† By the just judgment of heaven, the Jews, who had crucified their Messiah, and desired a robber and murderer to be granted to them, had their country overrun with robbers and murderers; and the frequency of the horrid assassinations among them, excited universal consternation.

Porcius Festus, who succeeded Felix, upon his removal from the government, supported a better character than his predecessor. At the commencement of his administration, the assassins were spreading terrour throughout Jerusalém. He punished these wretches with

* This is supposed to have happened in the year of Christ 55.

† Josephus, Vol. V. p. 184---185.

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exemplary severity, and exerted himself to the utmost to suppress the civil discords, which, in consequence of the extravagant claims, and frequent depositions of the Jewish pontiffs, raged among the priests, and filled the country, the city, and, sometimes, the temple, with blood.*

Festus died in his government, and the Roman emperour Nero sent Albinus in his room. Insatiable avarice being his ruling passion, he burdened the nation with extraordinary tributes; and became the encourager of all kinds of villany, by yielding to bribery and corruption.†

Gessius Florius, who succeeded Albinus, far surpassed him in wickedness; and gloried in his greater violence. He even robbed the sacred treasury, pillaged whole provinces, oppressed the Jews by all kinds of rapine and extortion, encouraged the robbery and plunder of the banditti, for a share of their booty; fomented the publick divisions; and even used his utmost exertions to excite an open rebellion, in hopes, that the publick confusion might prevent complaint against his iniquitous conduct. In a word, he was one of the vilest wretches, that ever disgraced human nature; and a distinguished instrument of divine ven-

* Josephus, Vol. V. p. 186. Mavor's Univ. Hist. Vol. II. p. 347.
† Josephus, Vol. V. p. 186.

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geance upon the subjects of his capricious tyranny.*

In consequence of the distracted state of Judea, many of its inhabitants sought an asylum in foreign countries; while those who remained, applied to Cestius Gallus, governour of Syria, who was at Jerusalem, at the passover, earnestly beseeching him to deliver them from the tyranny of their cruel governour. Cestius, instead of making a strict inquiry into the conduct of Florus, dismissed the Jews, with a general promise, that he should behave better for the future. In the meantime directions were given to compute the number of Jews then at Jerusalem, by that of the lambs offered at the festival, which were found to amount to 2,556,000.†

While the arbitrary conduct of the governour, and the irritated state of the Jewish people, threatened them with the horrours of war; famines, earthquakes, and terrifick sights in the heavens, appeared to fulfil the awful predictions of our Saviour. Josephus, among many other fearful prodigies, relates, that before the rebellion, when a great multitude were assembled in Jerusalem, at the passover, at the ninth hour of the night, so great a light shone round the altar, and the temple, that it A. D. 65.

* Josephus, Vol. V. p. 187. † Ibid.

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seemed to be bright day; that a few days after the festival, before sun set, chariots and troops of soldiers in armour were seen passing through the clouds, and surrounding cities; and, that the priests, going into the inner temple, felt the place move and tremble, and heard a voice, more than human, crying, "Let us depart hence."*

This account is confirmed by Tacitus, the Roman historian, who says, "Portents and prodigies announced the ruin of Jerusalem; swords were seen glittering in the air; embattled armies appeared; and the temple was illuminated by a stream of light, that issued from the heavens, the portal flew open, and a voice more than human, announced the immediate departure of the gods; there was heard, at the same time, a terrifick sound, as if superiour beings were actually rushing forth."†

A contest had long subsisted between the Jews and Syrians concerning Cesaria, which

* Josephus, Vol. V. See Archbishop Newcome's Observations on the character of our Lord for an admirable detail of these events.

† Murphy's Tacitus. Dr. Jortin remarks, that, "if Christ had not expressly foretold, that there *should be fearful sights, and great signs from heaven,* many, who give little heed to portents, and know that historians have been too credulous in this point, would have suspected that Josephus had exaggerated, and that Tacitus was misinformed; but, as the testimonies of Josephus and Tacitus confirm the predictions of Christ, so the predictions of Christ confirm the wonders related by these historians.—*Jortin's Remarks on Ecclesiastical History.*

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was situated in the confines of Syria and Judea. The Jews maintained, that the city belonged to them, because it was built by Herod their king; while the Syrians pretended, that it had always been considered as a Grecian city, since even that monarch had erected in it temples and statues. During the administration of Felix, the contest rose to such a height, that both parties armed against each other. That governour allayed the ferment for a time, by sending some of the chiefs of both nations to Rome to plead their cause before the emperour. The affair hung in suspense till this period, when Nero decided it against the Jews. This event was the immediate cause of the fatal war with the Romans, which proved the most desperate of any recorded in history; and terminated in the destruction of Jerusalem.*

The decree of the emperour was no sooner published, than the Jews, in all parts of the country, took up arms; Agrippa,† who hap- A. D. 66.

* Josephus, Vol. V. p. 188.

† He was the son of Agrippa, great grand son to Herod, and king of Chalcis. He resided chiefly at Jerusalem, and obtained the administration of the temple, and a right to appoint or depose the high priests. When the high priest Ananus had condemned St. James to death, some Jews, who disapproved of this cruelty, complained to Agrippa, and this prince deprived him of the high priesthood. He, with his sister Bernice, heard St. Paul's defence before Festus, the Roman governour, and he owned himself almost convinced by it. See Acts xxv. 26. Basnage's History of the Jews, p. 23.

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pened to be at Jerusalem at the commencement of the war, attempted to appease the fury of the multitude by an elaborate speech, in which he painted, in glowing colours, the vast extent and grandeur of the Roman empire; the mighty nations, who had been subdued by its all-conquering arms; the folly and infatuation of the Jews in opposing the masters of the world; and concluded by a pathetick exhortation to his countrymen, to lay down the weapons of their rebellion. But his entreaties and remonstrances were alike disregarded; and he was compelled to provide for his personal safety by quitting the city.*

The flames of intestine war now raged with irresistible fury in every part of the unhappy province, and its progress was marked by acts of cruelty and desperation. Twenty thousand Jews were massacred at Cesaria, fifty two thousand at Alexandria, two thousand at Ptolemais, and three thousand five hundred were cut off at Jerusalem by the troops of Florus, in one day. The Jews, to the utmost of their power, exercised similar cruelties on the Syrians and Romans, and slaughtered immense numbers of people.†

The rebellious Jews being joined in Jerusalem by numerous assassins, with their assistance beat the Romans out of the fortress of

* Josephus, Vol. V. p. 215. † Ibid.

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Antonia and Massada, possessed themselves of the towers of Phasael and Mariamne, and reduced the palaces of Agrippa, Bernice, and the high priest to ashes. They even carried their fury to such a height, as to massacre those Romans, who had capitulated on condition of having their lives preserved. Their treachery was, however, soon revenged on the faithful Jews in Sythopolis, who had offered to assist in reducing their factious brethren. But their sincerity was suspected, and above thirteen thousand of their number were inhumanly massacred. The rebels, in the mean time, crossed the Jordan, and took the fortress of Machærus and Cyprus; the latter of which, after putting all the Romans to the sword, was razed to the ground.*

Upon the general revolt of the Jews, Cestius Gallus, president of Syria, marched at the head of a powerful army into Judea and Galilee, burning all the towns and villages in his way, and slaughtering the inhabitants. He was met at Gibeon, a city about six miles from Jerusalem, by large numbers of Jews, who attacked him with such fury, that his whole army was in danger. Agrippa, who joined him with a body of troops, endeavoured once more to appease his rebellious countrymen by sending

* Josephus, Vol. V. p. 215.

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two of his officers to them with proposals of peace. But after they had killed one of his officers and wounded the other, Cestius advanced with his whole army, repulsed the rebels, and made himself master of the lower parts of Jerusalem.* Josephus says, "if Cestius had continued the seige a little longer he would have taken the city; but God, being angry with the wicked, would not suffer the war to be terminated at that time." But Cestius suddenly and unexpectedly raised the seige at the instigation of some of his officers, who, it is said, were bribed by Florus. Emboldened by this impolitick step, the insurgents pursued Cestius to his camp at Gibeon, from whence he escaped by night, with the loss of upwards of five thousand of his army.†

It is recorded by an ancient historian,‡ that the christians abandoned Jerusalem at this awful period. Having called to mind the warning of their divine Master, that, when they should see Jerusalem encompassed about with armies, and the abomination of desolation (the Roman army with their idolatrous images§) standing in the holy place, they should

* About A. D. 67. † Josephus.

‡ Eusebius's Ecclesiastical History, Book III. Chap. 5.

§ "The Roman armies are styled, *the abomination of desolation*, because they not only spread desolation before them, but were held in the utmost abhorrence by the Jews, on account of the images of

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flee unto the mountains. In obedience to this sacred injunction, they removed to Pella, a city beyond the river Jordan, about an hundred miles from Jerusalem, belonging to Agrippa, and inhabited by Gentiles. Here they obtained a safe asylum; and we do not find, that even a single individual of them perished in the impending ruin of the Jewish metropolis.*

The defeat of Cestius heightened the obstinacy of the Jews, who, elated with their success, made formidable preparations for the prosecution of the war. Ananus, the high priest, and Joseph, the son of Gorion, were appointed to govern Jerusalem, and repair the walls; while persons of approved valour and resolution were sent to command the troops in the provinces. Josephus,† a priest of considerable

their gods and emperours, which they carried in their standards, by which they swore, and to which they sacrificed. The usual ornaments of these standards gave such offence to the Jews, that, in peaceable times, the Romans entered Jerusalem without them; and Vitellius, at the request of some eminent Jews, humanely avoided marching his forces through Judea on account of these ensigns. When therefore they were planted within sight of the city and temple, when they stood within the holy precincts of Jerusalem, rivalling, as it were, the God of Israel, this was a hostile contempt of the Jews, and is justly placed among the presages of their utter destruction."—*Newcome's Observations on our Lord, p.* 240.

* Newton on the Prophecies, Part II. p 19.

† Josephus was born at Jerusalem, 37, and descended from the illustrious Asmonean family. He soon discovered great acuteness and penetration; and made so rapid a progress in the learning of the Jews, that he was occasionally consulted by the chief priests

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rank, and the celebrated writer of the antiquities and wars of the Jews, was appointed governour of the two Galilees.

Nero, the Roman emperour, who had received intelligence of the defeat of Cestius, and was alarmed at the energetick measures, which were taken by the Jews, commanded Vespasian, an officer of distinguished prudence and bravery, to march with all possible expedition into Judea. Accordingly, that commander employed himself in raising forces; and his son Titus was despatched to fetch two of the Roman legions from Alexandria. But the Jews, previous to the arrival of the army in their country, had twice attempted to take the city of Ascalon, and were each time repulsed, with the loss of ten thousand of their number in the first, and eight thousand in the second engagement.

Early in the following spring, the imperial army, which amounted to sixty thousand men,

and rulers of the city at the age of sixteen. He adopted the opinions of the Pharisees, and engaged in civil affairs. In the early part of the Jewish war, he was a famous general; and after he was taken prisoner admitted to share the confidence of Vespasian, and his son Titus, the latter of whom he accompanied to the siege of Jerusalem. After the city was taken, he attended Titus to Rome, where Vespasian gave him the freedom of the city, and settled a pension upon him. At Rome he applied himself to study the Greek language, and composed his history of the wars of the Jews. He lived till the thirteenth year of Domitian; and died in 93, aged fifty six years.—*General Biographical Dictionary, Vol. IX. p.* 28.

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completely armed, and fully disciplined, entered Galilee. Soon after their arrival, Gadara was taken on the first assault; all the adults were put to the sword, and fire set to the adjacent towns and villages. The conquerors next closely besieged Jotaphata. Josephus, being apprized of their design, supplied the city with ample stores, and defended it with heroick valour for forty seven days. The Romans, however, finally surprized and took the place, and all the inhabitants were either slain, or made prisoners. The captives amounted to one thousand two hundred; and forty thousand lost their lives on this occasion.*

Josephus was among the prisoners. He had escaped the general massacre, by flying from the midst of his enemies, and with forty of his bravest men, concealed himself in a deep cavern. His retreat was discovered to Vespasian, and that famous general sent to offer him life, upon honourable conditions. Upon his preparing to accept the terms, his companions upbraided him in the severest manner, and even offered to murder him. At this critical moment, he appeased their fury, by advising them, if they were determined upon death, to draw lots, who should kill his companion, in order to avoid the crime of suicide. This

* Josephus, Vol. V. p. 285.

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dreadful proposal was accepted; and providence so ordered it, that the two last survivors were Josephus, and a person whom he easily persuaded to live. The Jewish commander, upon his arrival in the Roman camp, assured Vespasian, that he should soon be chosen emperour; and, in consequence of this prediction, the conqueror treated him with great respect and generosity.*

While the Roman forces were besieging Jotaphata, the inhabitants of Japha, a neighbouring city, rebelled. The general sent a powerful army against them, and they were reduced, after an obstinate siege. All the men, amounting to 15,000, were massacred; and the women and children made prisoners. About a week after, the Samaritans, who had assembled in a riotous manner on Mount Gerizim, were almost all put to the sword, or perished. Joppa, which had been formerly laid waste by Cestius, being now repeopled and fortified by some seditious Jews, who infested the country, fell the next victim to the Roman vengeance. When the imperial army invaded that city, large numbers of the wretched inhabitants betook themselves to their ships. But they were driven back by a violent tempest, which dashed the vessels against the

* Josephus, Vol. V. p. 293.

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rocks. In this extreme distress many perished by suicide; others were swallowed up by the waves, or crushed by the broken ships; and such as were enabled to reach the shore were killed by the merciless Romans. The sea was for a long space discoloured with blood; four thousand two hundred dead bodies strewed the coast, and not a messenger remained to report this great calamity at Jerusalem.*

After Vespasian had refreshed his troops, he marched to Tiberias; the city yielded; and the inhabitants were spared at the moving intercession of king Agrippa. Tarichæ, on the sea of Galilee, was next attacked; and, after an obstinate resistance, reduced by the victorious Romans. Multitudes of Jews were destroyed, and upwards of thirty thousand sold for slaves. Vespasian proceeded to invest Gamala, a city placed on a rocky isthmus. The assailants were driven back with prodigious slaughter. Their last attack, however, was successful, the flight of their darts being favoured by a violent storm, which obstructed those of the enemy. After the city was taken, the exasperated victors slew four thousand of the inhabitants; and a large number fell victims to their own impatience and ungovernable fury. The Romans also obtained a deci-

* Josephus, Vol. V. p. 394. Newcome's Obser. on our Lord, p. 228.

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sive victory over the Jews, who had retired to a strong hold on Mount Itabys.*

Titus, who was sent to besiege Gischala, earnestly exhorted the inhabitants to save themselves from destruction, by a timely surrender. The citizens were inclined to accede to his advice; but a seditious Jew, named John, the son of Levi, head of his faction, vehemently opposed it; and, having the mob at his command, overawed the whole city. On the sabbath he entreated Titus to forbear hostilities till the following day, engaging, on that condition, to accede to his proposal. But, after his request was granted, the perfidious wretch, with a number of his followers, withdrew to Jerusalem. The citizens then surrendered, and, having appriz-ed Titus of John's flight, earnestly besought him not to punish the innocent with the guilty. The conqueror, after yielding to their entreaties, pursued and killed six thousand of the followers of John, and brought back three thousand women and children prisoners. The traitor himself eluded their pursuit, and exasperated the inhabitants of Jerusalem against the Romans.†

After the conquest of Galilee was completed, by the reduction of Gischala, Titus joined

* Josephus.

† Hence Josephus says, "God saved John for the destruction of Jerusalem," p. 294.

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his father, at Cesaria, where his troops were permitted to enjoy an interval of repose; during the remainder of this, and in the following year, the revolutions in the Roman empire prevented Vespasian from pursuing the war with vigour. He the more readily deferred commencing the siege of Jerusalem, from being apprized, that the Jews were wasting their strength by internal divisions, and facilitating the conquest of their devoted city.*

The Jewish nation at this time were divided into two very opposite parties. The more rational part, who clearly saw that the war, if continued, would end in the total ruin of their country, strongly urged the necessity of immediate submission to the Romans. Another party, called Zealots, from their boasted zeal for the law of God, and the religious customs of their ancestors, vehemently opposed all pacifick measures. This faction, which was far the most numerous and powerful, consisted of men of the vilest and most abandoned characters ever recorded in history. They were the remains of the sect of the Gaulonites, which was headed by Judas Theudas, and like him affirmed, that it would be offering the greatest dishonour to God to submit to any earthly potentate, much less to Romans

* Josephus, Vol. V. p. 355.

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and heathens. Under the mask of religion, these wretches committed the most horrid and unnatural crimes.*

John, who had fled from Gischala, put himself at the head of these incendiaries; and, being joined in that city by a band of robbers and assassins, seized upon the temple for a fortress, and that holy place was made a theatre of civil war. The opposite party, under the conduct of Ananus, a wise and venerable man, among the chief priests, armed in their own defence; and, after an obstinate contest, forced the Zealots into the inner cincture of the temple, where they were closely invested. John, who had pretended to agree with those, who desired peace, was sent to the Zealots with terms of accommodation; but he betrayed his trust, and earnestly exhorted them to persevere with unshaken firmness. He intimated to them the necessity of foreign assistance; and persuaded them to enter into a treaty with the Idumeans. But Ananus shut the gates of Jerusalem, and precluded the new allies from entering the city.†

On the night the Idumeans were excluded, there was a tremendous storm, accompanied with thunder, lightning, and a violent earthquake. The Zealots took advantage of the

* Josephus, Vol. V. p. 334. † Ibid, p. 378.

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prevailing terrour and confusion, sawed the bolts and hinges of the temple gates without being heard, forced the guards, sallied into the city, and introduced twenty thousand of their allies. After being thus strengthened and assisted, they perpetrated the most horrid cruelties. Twelve thousand persons of noble birth, and in the prime of life, upon their refusal to join them, were inhumanly murdered. Ananus and Jesus, the chief priests, were next put to death, and their dead bodies left without burial. After massacreing many persons of distinction, they turned their sanguinary cruelty upon the citizens and lower classes, and the ill fated capital was filled with blood and carnage. At this dreadful period, none dared publickly to lament the loss of his nearest friends or relations; or even afford them the last melancholy rites of interment. This cruel despotism compelled many to forsake Jerusalem, and take refuge with the Romans, though the attempt was extremely hazardous, as the avenues of the city were strictly guarded; and all, who were detected in attempting to escape, were immediately put to death. The Idumeans, who were of John's party, at length complained of the vast numbers, who were massacred; repented of having joined the tyrant, and returned to their native country.*

* Josephus, Vol. V. p. 347.

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The Zealots, after they had massacred or driven away all, who were capable of opposing them, turned their murderous weapons against each other. A new faction was formed against John by Simon, a man of an abandoned character, and daring spirit, who had his head quarters in the fortress of Masada. To increase his party, he published a proclamation, in which he promised liberty to the slaves, and suitable encouragement to all freemen, who would enlist under his banners. After he had, by this stratagem, collected many followers, he invaded Idumea, perpetrated all kinds of cruelty, corrupted the general of that country, and having gained possession of their military forces, advanced towards Jerusalem, and encamped before the city. This army destroyed the Jews without the walls, and were more dreaded than the Romans; while the Zealots within excited still greater terrour than either.*

The inhabitants of Jerusalem, in order to oppose the tyranny of John, whom they apprehended would burn the city, formed the fatal resolution of admitting Simon and his troops. Accordingly, they entered the metropolis, and increased the calamities of the miserable people, who were exposed alternately to the rage of both factions. Another party also arose in the city, under Eleazar, formerly a command-

* Josephus, Vol. V. p. 317.

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er of the Zealots, seized upon the court of the priests, and kept John confined within that of the Israelites. He being enclosed by Simon, who had possession of the city, and by Eleazar, who occupied the inner temple, defended himself with great resolution against both his powerful enemies; killed and wounded many of each party; and the temple and altar were frequently polluted with blood.*

During the internal contest in the city, Vespasian had marched from Cesarea, and conquered the yet unsubdued part of the country; he stormed Hebron near Jerusalem, slew all the adults, and burned the city. He had also gained possession of Gadara, the metropolis of Perea, and reduced all the Idumean towns to ashes, except such as were deemed serviceable to the troops, whom he appointed to overawe the country. As every place was now reduced, but Herodium, Masada, and Machærus, which the robbers had occupied, Jerusalem became the grand object of the Romans. Vespasian, therefore, being elected emperour, according to the prediction of Josephus, previously to his taking possession of his dominions, sent his son Titus to reduce this metropolis. An account of the tremendous calamities of the Jews, during the destruction.

A. D. 69.

* Josephus, Vol. V. p. 369.

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of their city and temple, will be related in the following chapter.

In the meantime, while, with the most painful sensations, we read an account of calamities, which no other description of men ever experienced in any age or country, let us recollect, that the Jews had called down the divine wrath, by crucifying the Lord of glory, and blasphemously exclaiming, "His blood be upon us and our children." This dreadful imprecation was fulfilled; and the vengeance of heaven, of which they had been mercifully forewarned by the prophets, and by Christ himself, was discharged upon them by that very nation, whom they had instigated to condemn the Messiah.

CHAP. II.

Strength of Jerusalem. The Jews are assembled from all parts to keep the passover. The city is invested by Titus. They make great preparations for an attack. They gain the first and second wall. A famine raged in Jerusalem. Inhuman practices of the Zealots. Jerusalem is surrounded by a wall. Terrible situation of the city. The temple is plundered, and daily sacrifice ceaseth. The temple set on fire. Horrid massacre of the Jews. All Jerusalem conquered by the Romans. The temple and city demolished. The remaining castles in Judea are taken.

JERUSALEM was built on two mountains, and surrounded by three walls on every side, except where it was enclosed with deep vallies, which were deemed inaccessible. Each wall

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was fortified by high towers. The celebrated temple and strong castle of Antonia, were on the east side of the city, and directly opposite to the mount of Olives. But notwithstanding the prodigious strength of this famed metropolis, the infatuated Jews brought on their own destruction by their intestine contests. At a time, when a formidable army was rapidly advancing, and the Jews were assembling from all parts, to keep the passover,* the contending factions were continually inventing new methods of mutual destruction, and in their ungoverned fury they wasted and destroyed such vast quantities of provisions as might have preserved the city many years.†

Such was the miserable situation of Jerusalem, when Titus began his march towards it with a formidable army; and, having laid waste the country in his progress, and slaughtered the inhabitants, arrived before its walls. The sight of the Romans produced a temporary reconciliation, among the contending factions, and they unanimously resolved to op- A. D. 70.

* "The day on which Titus encompassed Jerusalem was," says a late author, "the feast of the passover, and it is deserving of particular attention, that this was the anniversary of that memorable period, in which the Jews crucified their Messiah." See a pamphlet entitled, "the destruction of Jerusalem an absolute and irresistible proof of the divine authority of christianity." London, published 1805.

† Josephus.

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pose the common enemy. Their first sally was accordingly made with such fury and resolution, that, though Titus displayed uncommon valour on this occasion, the besiegers were obliged to abandon their camps, and flee to the mountains. No sooner had the Jews a short interval of quiet* from their foreign enemies, than their civil disorders were renewed. John, by an impious stratagem, found means to cut off or force Eleazar's men to submit to him; and the factions were again reduced to two, who opposed each other with implacable animosity.†

The Romans, in the mean time, exerted all their energy in making preparations for a powerful attack upon Jerusalem. Trees were cut down, houses levelled, rocks cleft asunder, and vallies filled up; towers were raised, and battering rams erected, with other engines of destruction, against the devoted city. After the offers of peace, which Titus had repeatedly sent by Josephus, were rejected with indignation, the Romans began to play their engines with all their might. The strenuous attacks

* Bishop Newcome remarks, that at this period the Christians had an opportunity of escaping from Jerusalem, according to our Lord's solemn exhortation, for some time before this flight was precluded; as it bore the appearance of a revolt to the Romans. —*Newcome's Observations*, p. 242.

† Josephus, Vol. VI. p. 127.

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of the enemy again united the contending parties within the walls, who had also engines, which they plied with uncommon fury. They had taken them lately from Cestius, but were so ignorant of their use they did little execution, while the Roman legions made terrible havock. The rebels were soon compelled to retire from the ponderous stones, which they threw incessantly from the towers they had erected, and the battering rams were at full liberty to play against the walls. A breach was soon made in it, at which the Romans entered, and encamped in the city, while the Jews retreated behind the second enclosure.*

The victors immediately advanced to the second wall, and plied their engines and battering rams so furiously, that one of the towers they had erected began to shake, and the Jews, who occupied it, perceiving their impending ruin, set it on fire, and precipitated themselves into the flames. The fall of this structure gave the Romans an entrance into the second enclosure. They were, however, repulsed by the besieged; but at length regained the place entirely, and prepared for attacking the third and inner wall.†

The vast number of people, which were enclosed in Jerusalem, occasioned a famine,

* Josephus, Vol. VI. p. 38.

† Ibid p. 49—50. Mavor's Universal History.

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which raged in a terrible manner; and, as their calamities increased, the fury of the Zealots, if possible, rose to a greater height. They forced open the houses of their fellow citizens in search of provisions; if they found any, they inflicted the most exquisite tortures upon them, under pretence, that they had food concealed. The nearest relations in the extremity of hunger, snatched the food from each other.

Josephus, who was an eye witness of the unparalleled sufferings, the Jews experienced during the siege of their metropolis, remarks, that "all the calamities, that ever befel any nation since the beginning of the world, were inferiour to the miseries of his countrymen at this awful period."* Thus we see the exact fulfillment of the emphatick words of our Saviour respecting the great tribulation in Jerusalem.†

Titus, who was apprized of their wretched condition, relaxed the siege four days; and, being still desirous of saving the city, caused provisions to be distributed to his army in sight of the Jews, who flocked upon the walls to behold it. Josephus was next sent to his countrymen to attempt to persuade them not to plunge themselves in inevitable ruin by per-

* Josephus, Vol. VI. p. 63. † Mattthew xxiv. 21.

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sisting in defence of a place, which could hold out but little longer, and which the Romans looked upon as already their own. He exhorted them in the most pathetick terms, to save themselves, their temple, and their country; and painted in strong colours the fatal effects, which would result from their obstinacy. But the people, after many bitter invectives, began to dart their arrows at him; yet he continued to address them with greater vehemence, and many were induced by his eloquence, to run the utmost risk in order to escape to the Romans; while others became more desperate, and resolved to hold out to the last extremity.*

The Jews, who were forcibly seized by the Romans without the walls, and who made the utmost resistance for fear of punishment, were scourged and crucified near the city. Famine made them so daring in these excursions, that five hundred, and sometimes more, suffered this dreadful death every day; and, on account of the number, Josephus observes, that "space was wanted for the crosses, and crosses for the captives." And yet, contrary to Titus's intention, the seditious Jews were not disposed to a surrender by these horrid spectacles. In order to check desertion, they represented

* Josephus, Vol. VI. p. 50.

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the sufferers as suppliants, and not as men taken by resistance. Yet even some, who deemed capital punishment inevitable, escaped to the Romans, considering death, by the hands of their enemies, a desirable refuge, when compared with the complicated distress, which they endured. And though Titus mutilated many, and sent them to assure the people, that voluntary deserters were well treated by him, and earnestly to recommend a surrender of the city, the Jews reviled Titus from the walls, defied his menances, and continued to defend the city by every method, which stratagem, courage, and despair could suggest.*

In order to accelerate the destined ruin of Jerusalem, Titus, discouraged and exasperated by the repeated destruction of his engines and towers, undertook the arduous task of enclosing the city with a strong wall, in order to prevent the inhabitants from receiving any succour from the adjacent country, or eluding his vengeance by flight. Such was the persevering spirit of the soldiers, that in three days they enclosed the city by a wall nearly five miles in circuit. Thus was the prophecy of our Saviour accomplished :† "*The days shall come upon thee, when thine enemies shall cast*

* Josephus, Vol. VI. p. 51—65. Newcome's Observations, &c. p. 245.

† Luke xix. 43

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a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side." Upon this, the famine raged with augmented violence, and destroyed whole families; while Jerusalem exhibited a horrid spectacle of emaciated invalids and putrescent bodies.* The dead were too numerous to be interred; and many expired in the performance of this office. The publick calamity was too great for lamentation, and the silence of unutterable wo overspread the city. The Zealots, at this awful period, endeavoured to encourage the obstinacy of the people, by hiring a set of wretches, pretenders to prophecy, to go about the city, and declare the near approach of a speedy and miraculous deliverance. This impious stratagem for a while afforded delusive hopes to the miserable remains of the Jewish nation. But

* The vast number of people shut up by the war, occasioned pestilential diseases, and afterwards famine of course advanced more rapidly. Dr. Lardner observes, that "it might have been expected, that the bad food, which the Jews were forced to make use of, the strictness of the siege, and the noisome smell of so many dead bodies lying in heaps in the city itself, and in the vallies and ditches without the walls, should have produced a plague. But nothing of this kind appears in the history; which must have been owing to the special interposition of divine providence. Josephus, in some of the places, where he speaks of the putrefaction of the dead bodies, may use expressions equivalent to pestilential; but he never shews, that there was an infection; if there had been, it would have equally affected the Romans and the Jews, and the siege of the city must have been broken up, and the Romans would have gone off as fast as they could."—*Watson's Tracts, Vol. V. p.* 170.

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at length an affair took place in Jerusalem, which filled the inhabitants with consternation and despair; and the Romans with horrour and indignation. A Jewess, eminent for birth and opulence, rendered frantick with her sufferings, was reduced to the dreadful extremity of killing and feeding upon her infant. Titus, being apprized of this inhuman deed, swore the total extirpation of the accursed city and people; and called Heaven to witness, that he was not the author of their calamity.*

The Romans, having pursued the attack with the utmost rigour, advanced their last engines against the walls; after having converted into a desert, for wood to construct them, a country well planted, and interspersed with gardens, for more than eleven miles round the city. They scaled the inner wall, and after a sanguinary encounter, made themselves masters of the fortress of Antonia. Still, however, not only the Zealots, but many of the people, were yet so blinded, that, though nothing was now left but the temple; and the Romans were making formidable preparation to batter it down, they could not persuade themselves, that God would suffer that holy place to be taken by heathens; but still expected a miraculous deliverance. And though the war was

* Josephus, Vol. VI. p. 73—82, 108.

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advancing towards the temple, they themselves burnt the portico, which joined it to Antonia; which occasioned Titus to remark, that they began to destroy with their own hands, that magnificient edifice, which he had preserved. When Josephus was sent for the last time to John, who commanded in the temple, to upbraid him for obstinately exposing that sacred building, and the miserable remains of God's people to inevitable destruction, he answered with the bitterest invectives, adding, that "he was defending the Lord's vineyard, which he was sure could not be taken by any human force;" yet this monster had not scrupled to plunder the temple of a large quantity of its golden utensils, and the magnificent gifts of kings, which he converted to his own use. He also seized the sacred oil, which was to maintain the lamps; and even used to intoxicate himself and his party with the wine, which was intended for sacrifice.*

On the 17th of July, the daily sacrifice ceased for the first time since its restoration by the brave Judas Maccabeus, there being no proper person left to make the offering. Titus upbraided the Zealots for neglecting their worship; and challenged them to leave the temple,

* Josephus, Vol. VI. p. 79. Mavor's Universal History, Vol. II. p. 313.

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and fight on more proper ground, in order to preserve that sacred edifice from the fury of his troops. But, as they persisted in their inflexible obstinacy, Titus, after several bloody engagements, took possession of the outward court of the Gentiles, and forced the besieged into that of the priests. The Roman commander had determined in council not to burn the temple, considering the existence of so proud a structure an honour to himself. He, therefore, attempted to batter down one of the galleries of the precinct; but as the strength of the wall eluded the force of all his engines, his troops next endeavoured to scale it, but were repulsed with considerable loss. When Titus found, that his desire of saving the sacred building was like to cost many lives, he set fire to the gates of the outer temple, which, being plaited with silver, burnt all night, and the flame rapidly communicated to the adjacent galleries and porticoes. Titus, who was still desirous of preserving the temple, caused the flames to be extinguished; and appeased the clamours of his troops, who vehemently insisted on the necessity of razing it to the ground. The following day was, therefore, fixed upon for a general assault upon that magnificent structure.*

* Josephus, Vol. VI. p. 93—94.

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The utmost exertions of Titus to save the temple were, however, ineffectual. Our Saviour had foretold its total destruction; and his awful prediction was about to be accomplished.* And now, says Josephus, "the fatal day approached in the revolution of ages, the 10th of August, emphatically called, *the day of vengeance*, in which the first temple had been destroyed by the king of Babylon." While Titus was reposing himself in his pavilion, a Roman soldier, without receiving any command, urged as it were by a divine impulse, seized some of the blazing materials, and, with the assistance of another soldier, who raised him from the ground, threw them through a window into one of the apartments, that surrounded the sanctuary. The whole north side, up to the third story, was immediately enveloped in flames. The Jews, who now began to suppose Heaven had forsaken them, rushed in with violent lamentations, and spared no effort, not even life itself, to preserve the sacred edifice on which they had rested their security.

Titus, being awakened by the outcry, hastened to the spot, and commanded his soldiers to exert themselves to the utmost to extinguish the fire. He called, prayed, and threatened his men. But so great was the clamour and tu-

* Matt. xxiv. 2.

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mult, that his entreaties and menaces, were alike disregarded. The exasperated Romans, who resorted thither from the camp, were engaged either in increasing the conflagration, or killing the Jews; the dead were heaped about the altar, and a stream of blood flowed at its steps.*

Still, as the flames had not reached the inner part of the temple, Titus, with some of his chief officers, entered the sanctuary and most holy place, which excited his astonishment and admiration. After having in vain repeated his attempts to prevent its destruction, he saved the golden candlestick, the table of shew bread, the altar of perfumes, which were all of pure gold; and the volume of the law, wrapped up in a rich golden tissue. Upon his leaving the sacred place, some other soldiers set fire to it, after tearing off the golden plaiting from the gates and timber work.†

A horrid massacre soon followed, in which prodigious multitudes perished; while others rushed in a kind of phrenzy into the midst of the flames, and precipitated themselves from the battlements of their falling temple. Six thousand persons, who, deluded by a false prophet, with hopes of a miraculous deliverance, had fled to a gallery yet standing without the temple, perished at once by the relentless bar-

* Josephus, Vol. VI. p. 117. † Ibid, p. 115.

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barity of the soldiers, who set it on fire, and suffered none to escape. The conquerors carried their fury to such an height, as to massacre all they met, without distinction of age, sex, or quality. They also burnt all the treasure houses, containing vast quantities of money, plate, and the richest furniture. In a word, they continued to mark their progress with fire and sword, till they had destroyed all, except two of the temple gates, and that part of the court, which was destined for the women.*

In the meantime, many of the Zealots by making the most vigorous exertions, effected their escape from the temple, and retired into the city. But the avenues were so strictly guarded, that it was impossible for them to escape. They therefore fortified themselves, as well as they were able, on the south side of it; from whence John and Simon sent to desire a conference with Titus. They were answered, that though they had caused all this ruin and effusion of blood, yet their lives should be spared, if they would surrender themselves. They replied, that "they had engaged by the most solemn oaths, not to deliver up their persons to him on any condition; and requested permission to retire to the mountains with their wives and children." The Roman general, en-

* Josephus, Vol. VI. p. 116—117.

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raged at this insolence, ordered proclamation to be made, that not one of them should be spared, since they persisted in rejecting his last offers of pardon.*

The daughter of Zion, or the lower city, was next abandoned to the fury of the Roman soldiers, who plundered, burnt, and massacred with insatiable rage. The Zealots next betook themselves to the royal palace in the upper and stronger part of Jerusalem, styled also the city of David, on Mount Zion. As many of the Jews had deposited their possessions in the palace for security, they attacked it, killed eight thousand four hundred of their countrymen, and plundered their property.†

The Roman army spent nearly twenty days in making great preparations for attacking the upper city, especially the royal palace; during which time, many came and made their submission to Titus. The warlike engines then played so furiously upon the Zealots, that they were seized with a sudden panic, quitted the towers, which were deemed impregnable, and ran like mad men towards Shiloah, intending to have attacked the wall of circumvallation, and escaped out of the city. But being vigorously repulsed, they endeavoured to conceal

* Josephus, Vol. VI. p. 127. † Ibid.

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themselves in subterraneous passages; and, as many as were discovered, were put to death.

The conquest of Jerusalem being now completed, the Romans placed their ensigns upon the walls with triumphant joy. They next walked the streets, with swords in their hands, and killed all they met. Amidst the darkness of that awful night, fire was set to the remaining divisions of the city, and Jerusalem, wrapt in flames, and bleeding on every side, sunk in utter ruin and destruction. During the siege, which lasted nearly five months, upwards of eleven hundred thousand Jews perished. John and Simon, the two grand rebels, with seven hundred of the most beautiful and vigorous of the Jewish youth, were reserved, to attend the victor's triumphal chariot. After which, Simon was put to death; and John, who had stooped to beg his life, condemned to perpetual imprisonment.*

The number, who were taken captive during the fatal contest with the Romans, amounted to ninety seven thousand; many of whom were sent into Syria, and other provinces, to be exposed on the publick theatres, to fight like gladiators, or to be devoured by wild beasts. The number of those destroyed, during the war, which lasted seven years, is com-

* Josephus, Vol. VI. p. 139.

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puted to have been one million four hundred and sixty two thousand.*

When the sword had returned to its scabbard for want of objects whereon to exercise its fury, and the troops were satisfied with plunder, Titus commanded the whole city and temple to be demolished. Upon viewing the strength of the works, he exclaimed, "We have fought with the assistance of God; it was God who drove the Jews out of these fortifications; for what can the hands of men, or the force of machines effect against these towers." In order to give posterity an idea of the strength of the city, and the astonishing valour of its conquerors, he preserved the highest towers, Phasælus, Hippicus, and Mariamne, and a part of the wall, which surrounded Jerusalem to the west. All the other circuit of the city was so levelled, as not to leave those, who approached it, any proof that it ever had been inhabited.† It is recorded in the Talmud, and by Mamonides, that Terentius Rufus ploughed up the foundations of the temple; thus were our Saviour's prophecies fulfilled: "*Thine enemies shall lay thee even with the ground; and there shall not be left one stone upon another.*"‡

* Josephus, Vol. VI. p. 139. † Ibid, p. 142—148.

‡ Luke xix. 44. Newcome's Observations, p. 258.

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On the reduction of Jerusalem, Titus returned in triumph to Rome, where the senate decreed him a triumph with Vespasian, his father; and all things, that were esteemed the most valuable and beautiful were exhibited to grace this great occasion. Among the rich spoils, those, which were saved from the temple of Jerusalem, were the most remarkable; and the volume of the law was the most venerable of all the trophies of the conqueror.

Three strong castles still remained untaken in the almost desolated land of Judea. Lucillius Bassus was sent by Vespasian, as lieutenant general; and soon reduced Herodium and Machærus. But the castle of Masada, being very strong both by nature and art; and defended by Eleazar, a man of undaunted courage, baffled the attacks of the Romans. At length, however, they caused it to be surrounded by an high wall, set fire to the gates, and prepared to storm it the following day. When the Jews found no way of saving themselves, or their fortress, from the hands of the enemy, Eleazar instigated the garrison to burn the valuable stores of the castle, destroy first their women and children, and then themselves. Ten men, who were chosen by lot, executed this horrid purpose. The last survivor among these executioners, set fire to the

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A. D. 73. place, and destroyed himself. When the Romans on the morrow were preparing to scale the walls, two women, who had escaped by concealing themselves, while the rest were intent on slaughter, related to them the whole transaction.*

After this terrible event, the opposition on the part of the Jews ceased. It was, however, the submission of impiety and despair. Everywhere ruin and desolation presented itself to the solitary passenger, and a melancholy and deathlike silence pervaded the whole region.

"The ruin of the Jews," says a late historian, "is, in itself, a very interesting event; but infinitely more so, when considered as connected with religion. A bloody war, in which party rage conspires with foreign arms to destroy the nation; an ancient and famous people, who from their country, as from a centre, had spread themselves into every part of the known world, smitten with the most dreadful calamities ever recorded in history; a great and lofty city devoured by flames, and eleven hundred thousand inhabitants buried under its ruins; a temple, the wonder of the world, and the object of the veneration of those, who followed a different worship, so entirely demolished, that not *one stone was left upon another*,

* Josephus, Vol. VI. p. 188—189.

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are surely such events, as, if they were merely human, could not but highly interest every one. How much more regard ought we to pay to them, when we reflect, that they were foretold by Jesus Christ forty years, before they happened, at a time, when nothing seemed to portend such an event;* that the dispersion of the Jewish people, and the ruin of their temple, form a part of the gospel system, by means of which, a knowledge of the true God was no longer to be confined to one nation only, or his worship attached to one particular place. In short, that these disasters, the greatest, that can be conceived, are the vengeance, which God took for the greatest crime, which ever was perpetrated upon the face of the earth, the cruel and ignominious death of his son."†

It has pleased providence, that this important part of history should be transmitted to us by Josephus, one of the Jewish nation, who was an eyewitness, and had himself a great share in the principal events. He has, unintentionally, given us a striking demonstration

* It ought to be remembered, that the prediction of our Saviour was given at a time, when Judea was at peace, under the sway of a nation, which never, till the destruction of Jerusalem, treated their enemies with utter excision, and unsparing desolation.—*Watson's Tracts.*

† Crevior's Roman History.

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of the truth of the christian religion, by exhibiting, in the most lively manner, how the prophecies of our blessed Lord, concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, were literally fulfilled in their fullest extent.

CHAP. III.

Wretched state of the Jews after the destruction of Jerusalem. Titus commands their lands to be sold, and confiscates the tribute which was paid annually to the temple. His successor, Domitian, treats them with still greater severity. Sedition at Alexandria. The temple built by Onias is shut up. The Jews seek an asylum in various countries. Institution of the patriarchs in the west. State of literature among the Jews. Of the cabbalistick philosophy. Account of the celebrated cabbalistick book. Of the rabbi. Akibha.

THE condition of the Jews was extremely miserable after the destruction of their capital. The multitude of the dead, the prisoners, who were sold, and the fugitives, who had fled into various parts of the world, had left the country almost depopulated.* The once flourishing plains of Palestine were covered with dead bodies; and of the celebrated cities, which existed formerly on their coasts, such as Capernaum, Bethsaida, and Chorazin, nothing was left but shapeless ruins. Some women and old men were permitted to remain in Je-

* Yet there were still a sufficient number of Jews remaining t establish themselves in a short time; since sixty years after the ruin of the temple, they again raised forces, and excited a formidable rebellion. See Chap. IV.

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rusalem; but all, who were able to bear arms, were removed. A strong attachment to their native residence probably induced a number to return, and dwell among the ruins of their devoted city.*

After the war was terminated, the emperour ordered all the lands in Judea to be sold, strictly prohibited building any cities therein, and commanded the Jews, on condition of preserving their religion, to pay to Jupiter Capitolinus the capitation tax, which devotion had destined annually for the service of the temple. Although the sum assessed on the head of each individual was inconsiderable, the use for which it was assigned, and the severity, with which it was exacted, was considered as an intolerable grievance.†

Domitian, brother to Titus, who succeeded in the Roman empire, increased the calamities of this wretched people. He extorted the payment of the taxes with the utmost rigour; endeavoured to extirpate all the lineage of Da-

* Basnage, p. 508.

† Though, after the conquest of Pompey, Judea was made tributary to the Romans, they were permitted to collect the taxes by their own receivers, and were exempted from tribute during the sabbatical year. The annual tribute to the temple, they supposed to be an offering to God, as his subjects. But after the destruction of Jerusalem, the emperour usurped the place of God, and appropriated the tribute to himself. This was the more afflicting and disgraceful, because it obliged them to purchase the liberty of exercising their religion.—*Basnage, p.* 509.

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vid; and involved them in the persecution, which the Christians endured during his tyrannical reign; and many of the Jews were condemned to suffer death.*

A. D. 72. Notwithstanding their late calamities, some of the seditious Jews, who had retired to Alexandria in Egypt, began to excite fresh insurrections. But their countrymen, who resided in the city, apprehending the consequences, that might ensue, prudently interfered, and delivered them up to the Romans, who put six hundred of them to death. They maintained their inflexible obstinacy to the last; and even their children would suffer the most exquisite tortures, rather than acknowledge Cæsar for their lord. The emperour, being apprized of their rebellious disposition, ordered the temple, which Onias had built in Egypt, to be shut up, lest it should afford them a pretence for assembling themselves, and thus give them an opportunity of exciting some new sedition.†

Multitudes of Jews, who had survived the sad catastrophe of the destruction of their city and temple, sought an asylum in various parts of the world. Many retired to Egypt, where a Jewish colony had resided from the time of Alexander; others fled to Cyrene; a large number removed to Babylon, and joined their

* Basnage, p. 509. † Ibid, p. 492.

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brethren, who had remained in that country ever since the captivity; some took refuge in Persia, and other eastern countries. By degrees, they formed themselves into a regular system of government, or rather subordination, connected with the various bodies of their brethren dispersed throughout the world. They were divided into the eastern and western Jews; the western included Egypt,* Judea, Italy, and other parts of the Roman empire. The eastern were settled in Babylon, Chaldea, Assyria, and Persia. In process of time both these parties chose a distinguished personage to preside over each of their respective divisions. The heads of the eastern Jews were styled princes of the captivity; and those of the western Jews were known by the title of patriarch. Mr. Basnage and other learned men have supposed, that the patriarchal† dignity was first instituted in the reign of Nerva, who succeeded Domitian. This emperour favoured the Jews; recalled those, who had been banished on account of their religion; re-

* Some refugees passed from Egypt to Ethiopia.—*Basnage, p.* 494.

† According to the Jewish writers, this office originated at a much earlier era. The first patriarch was Hillel, surnamed the Babylonian. He came to Jerusalem about thirty years, before the birth of Christ, and lived to an advanced age. The Jews regarded him as a second Moses, who was little inferiour to their lawgiver; and asserted, that the patriarchal dignity continued in his family till the fifth century.—*Modern Universal History, Vol. XIII. p.* 141.

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lieved them from the heavy taxes, which had been imposed upon them by his predecessor; and forbade their being molested in future, on account of their religion. They are supposed to be of the Levitical race, since the least attempt in the tribe of Judah to recover any of their former power, would have excited the jealousy of the Romans.* But the priests and levites were permitted to assume the power of teaching the people, to set up schools, to appoint preceptors over them, and at length install one above the rest, with the title of patriarch; because neither their tribe, which was excluded the regal dignity, nor their office, which was confined to religious concerns, could give umbrage to the Romans. The celebrated city of Tiberias, situated on the banks of a lake, which bears its name, and was rebuilt by Herod, tetrarch of Galilee, was chosen for the patriarchal seat. The dignity of their chiefs was hereditary.†

The authority, which the patriarchs acquired over the people committed to their charge,

* The house of David was now almost extinct; and the few, who remained, reduced to poverty, and obliged to labour for their daily subsistence. If there was any shadow of authority among this people, after the destruction of their city and temple, it fell into the hands of the priests of the race of Levi and Aaron. Their understanding and science raised them above the vulgar; and as the people became more numerous, their authority increased.

† Basnage, p. 146.

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owed its rise and gradual increase to their great reputation for learning and piety. They decided cases of conscience, and religious controversies; presided over synagogues; were empowered to appoint subordinate ministers and apostles to execute their orders; and to receive an annual contribution from their dispersed brethren, in order to support their dignity. They obtained, by degrees, a great authority over the western Jews, who were pleased to depend upon them in order to maintain some shadow of union. The power, which these chiefs obtained, has, however, been much exaggerated by the Jews, to enable them to repel a powerful argument urged by the Christians, viz. that the sceptre, or regal authority, was departed from them.*

The learned Dr. Lightfoot has imagined, that the Jewish sanhedrim was not immediately destroyed, but only removed to Jafna, and thence to Tiberias, where it subsisted till the death of Judah, the saint. Other learned men, particularly Mr. Basnage, suppose this tribunal did not exist after the destruction of Jerusalem, for the following reasons.† If

* Basnage, p. 146.

† After the sanhedrim was abolished, the Jews substituted in its room some particular tribunals for the decision of religious disputes. These tribunals, which were afterwards called houses of judgment, were a very imperfect image of the sanhedrim.—*Picart's Religious Ceremonies, p.* 195.

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Titus had made any such concession, Josephus would have mentioned it for the honour of his nation. Domitian, who hated and oppressed the Jews, would never have allowed them such a signal privilege; besides, it has been the prevailing idea of the Jews, as well as of the Christians, that this tribunal had not power to sit in any other place but in Jerusalem. Our Saviour, it appears, alluded to this, when he said, (Luke xviii. 33) that *it could not be, that a prophet should perish or be condemned to death out of Jerusalem*, since the sanhedrim alone had the power of passing that sentence on him.*

The Jews, though a considerable part of their religion was involved in the destruction of their country, still adhered with inflexible obstinacy to those customs and religious rites, which remained in their power to practice. After their national polity was dissolved, they appear to have been confirmed in their attachment to the oral traditions and unauthorized decisions of the rabbies. As they agreed in thinking, that their religious rites and observances were the only objects worthy their attention, it followed, that their literary controversies, instead of embracing, like those of the philosophical sects of the Pagans, the wide field of general literature, were directed

* Basnage. Modern Universal History, Vol. XIII. p. 136.

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and confined to their religious and ritual institutions, and were exhausted in questions or discussions immediately referrible to these subjects.*

After the devastation and ruin of their country, a small number of learned men only were left among them to transmit their ancient doctrines and institutions to posterity. Of these, part escaped into Egypt, and part withdrew into Babylon; in both which countries the refugees were humanely received. Those, who remained in Palestine, collected the scattered fragments of Jewish learning from the general wreck into the academy of Jafna (frequently called by the Greek writers, Jamnia) where they also revived their forms of worship. The rabbi Jochanan,† was the founder of this school, and the design, which he begun was completed, as far as the state of the times would permit by the rabbi Gamaliel, who is, from this circumstance, called Gamaliel Jafniensis. The success, which attended this school, induced many of the dispersed Jews

* Butler's Horæ Biblicæ, p. 40.

† The Jewish writers assert, that the academy which Jochanan erected at Jafna, consisted of three hundred schools, or classes of pupils. They extol the extraordinary merit of this rabbi in the most extravagant terms. According to them, "if the whole heavens were paper, all the trees in the world pens, and all the men writers, they would not be able to record all his merits."—*Modern Universal History, Vol. XIII. p.* 141.

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to return to Palestine; and another academy was formed at Tiberias, which soon became the chief seat of Jewish learning in its native country. This school obtained immunities and privileges from the emperour Antoninus Pius; and it produced that curious record of Jewish wisdom, the Jerusalem Talmud. Other schools, after the examples of Jafna and Tiberias, were erected at Bitterah near Jerusalem, at Lydda or Diospolis, at Cesarea, and (which became more celebrated than the rest) at Zippora, or Sephora, in Galilee.*

From this time, there was not wanting a succession of Jewish doctors to transmit their religion and philosophy to posterity. These doctors flourished, not only in Palestine, but in the Babylonish schools, which, in process of time, were established at Sora, Pundebita, and other places on the Euphrates.†

Two methods of instruction were in use among the Jews; the one publick, the other secret. The publick doctrine was that, which was openly taught the people from the law of Moses, and the traditions of the fathers. It comprehended the popular articles of faith, and rules of manners.‡

* Enfield's Philosophy, Vol. II. p. 198.

† According to Basnage, these schools were not founded till the beginning of the third century.

‡ Enfield.

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The secret doctrine of the Jews was that, which treated of the mysteries of the divine nature and other sublime subjects, and was called cabbala, from a Hebrew word, which signifies to receive, because it was received by tradition. After the manner of the Pythagorean and Egyptian mysteries, it was taught only to certain persons, who were bound, under the most solemn anathema, not to divulge it.

The cabbala is divided into three sorts. By the first, the Jews extract from the words of scripture recondite meanings, which are sometimes ingenious, but always fanciful. The second is a kind of magick in employing the words and letters of the scriptures in certain combinations, which they suppose have power to make the good and evil spirits of the invisible world familiar with them. The third, which is properly the cabbala, is an art, by which they profess to raise mysterious expositions of scripture upon the letters of the sentences, to which they apply them.*

The Jews assert, that the mysteries of the cabbala contain the profoundest truths of religion, which, to be fully comprehended by finite beings, are revealed through the medium of allegory and similitude, in the same manner as angels can only render themselves visible

* Butler's Horæ Biblicæ. Basnage, p. 202.

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upon earth by assuming a subtle body of refined matter.* According to their account, while Adam was in paradise, the angel Rasael brought him a book from heaven, which contained the doctrines of heavenly wisdom. And when Adam received this book, angels came down to him to learn its contents; but he refused to admit them to the knowledge of sacred things, entrusted to him alone. They assert, that, after the fall, this book was taken back into heaven; after many prayers and tears, God restored it to Adam, and it passed from Adam to Seth. The Jewish fables proceed to relate, that the book being lost, and the mysteries it contained almost forgotten in the degenerate age before the flood, they were restored by special revelation to Abraham, who committed them to writing in the book Jezirah; that the revelation was renewed to Moses,† who received a traditional and mystical, as well as a written and preceptive law, from God; that, being again lost amidst the calamities of the Babylonish captivity, it was once more revealed to Esdras; that it was preserved in Egypt, and has been transmitted

* Maurice's Indian Antiquities, Vol. IV. p. 588.

† According to the Jewish accounts, all the patriarchs of the ancient world had their separate angels to instruct them in these mysterious arcana; and Moses himself was initiated in them by the illustrious spirit Metatron.—*Basnage, p.* 185.

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to posterity, through the hands of Simeon-ben-Setach, Elkanah, Akibha, Simeon-ben-Jochai, and others.

Dr. Enfield,* from whom the above account is chiefly selected, supposes, that the mystical

* The chief heads of the cabbalistic doctrine, are thus delineated by the above mentioned author.

"From nothing, nothing can be produced; since the distance between existence and non-entity is infinite. Matter is too imperfect in its nature, and approaches too near to non-entity to be self existent. The Being from whom all things proceed is a spirit, uncreated, eternal, intelligent, percipient, having within itself the principles of life and motion, existing by the necessity of its nature, and filling the immensity of space. This spirit is *Eneoph*, the infinite Deity. This Eternal Fountain of existence sends forth from himself natures of various orders, which, nevertheless, are still united to their source. The world is a permanent emanation from the Deity, in which his attributes and properties are unfolded, and variously modified. The nearer any emanation is to the First Fountain, the more perfect and divine is its nature; and the reverse.

"Before the creation of the world, all space was filled with the *Or Haen Soph*, or infinite intellectual light. But, when the volition for the production of nature was formed in the divine mind, the eternal light, hitherto equally diffused through the infinite expanse, withdrew itself to an equal distance in every direction, from a certain point, and thus left about this centre, a spherical portion of empty space, as a field for the operation of emanation, by which all things were to be produced. In the space from which the divine light was thus withdrawn, there were still, however, some portions or traces left of the divine essence, which were to become the receptacle of rays, sent forth from the Eternal Fountain, or the basis of future worlds. From a certain part of the concavity of infinite light, which surrounded the opaque sphere, the energy of emanation was first exerted, and rays were sent forth in right lines, into the dark abyss. The beam of light, thus produced, formed a channel, through which streams were to flow for the production o worlds. This beam was united to the concave of light, and was directed towards the centre of the opaque sphere. From this lumi-

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or cabbalistic philosophy of the Jews, arose in the time of the first Ptolemies, and originated in Egypt, where they learnt, by the help of allegory, to mix oriental, Pythagorean, and Pla-

nous channel, streams of light flowed, at different distances from the centre, in a circular path, and formed distinct circles of light, separated from the concave of light, or from each other, by portions of dark or empty space. Of these circles of light, ten were produced, which may be called *Sephiræ*, or *Splendours*.

"The rectilineal beam of light, which is the first emanation from the eternal fountain, and is itself the source of all other emanations, may be distinguished by the name of *Adam Kadman*, the first man, the first production of divine energy, or, the *Son of God*. The Sephiræ are fountains of emanation, subordinate to Adam Kadman, which send forth rays of divine light or communicate essence and life to inferiour beings. The ten Sephiræ are known, according to the order of emanation, by the names, Intelligence, or the Crown, Knowledge, Wisdom, Strength, Beauty, Greatness, Glory, Stability, Victory, Dominion.

"These are not the instruments of the divine operations, but media, through which the Deity diffuses himself through the sphere of the universe, and produces whatever exists. They are not beings detached from the Deity, but substantial virtues or powers, distinctly, but dependently, sent forth from the eternal source of existence through the mediation of Adam Kadman, the first emanating power, and becoming the immediate source of existence to subordinate emanations. They are dependent upon the First Fountain, as rays upon a luminary, which is conceived to have sent them forth with a power of drawing them back, at pleasure, into itself.

"The first infinite source of being, is the *Ensophic* world, or world of infinity, within which, after the manner above described, four worlds are produced by the law of emanation, according to which the superiour is the immediate source of the inferiour; these are *Aziluth*, or the world of emanation, including the Sephiræ; *Brish*, or the world of creation, containing certain spiritual natures, which derive their essence from the Sephiræ; *Jezirah*, or the world of forms, composed of substantial natures, derived from the superiour spiritual substances, and placed within ethereal vehicles, which they inform; and *Asiah*, or the material and visible

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tonic dogmas with Hebrew wisdom. The cabbala having, according to this author, obtained early credit among the Jews, as part of their sacred tradition, was transmitted under

world, comprehending all those substances which are capable of motion, composition, division, and dissolution.

"These derived worlds are different evolutions, or expansions of the divine essence, or distinct classes of beings, in which the infinite light of the divine nature is exhibited with continually decreasing splendour, as they recede from the First Fountain. The last and most distant production of the divine energy of emanation is matter; which is produced when the divine light, by its recession from the Fountain, becomes so attenuated as to be lost in darkness, leaving nothing but an opaque substance, which is only one degree above non-entity. Matter has no separate and independent existence, but is merely a modification and permanent effect of the emanative energy of the divine nature.

"The Sephiræ, or first order of emanative being, existing in *Aziluth* are superiour to spirits, and are called *Parzuphim*, *Persons*, to denote that they have a substantial existence. The inhabitants of the second world are called Thrones, on account of the dominion, which they possess over the various orders of Angels, which inhabit the third world. The fourth, or material world, is the region of evil spirits, called *Klippoth*, the dregs of emanation. These are the authors of the evil, which is found in the material world; but they are continually aspiring towards the Sephiræ, and will, in the great revolution of nature, return into the inexhaustible fountain of deity. Spirits of all orders have a material vehicle, less pure and subtile in proportion to their distance from *Ensoph*; and this vehicle is of the nature of the world next below that to which they belong. *Metatron* is the prince of *Jezirah*, or the angelick world, in which they are ten distinct orders; *Sandalphon* of *Asiah*, or the material world; these together with the hosts over which they preside, animate aerial vehicles, capable of impression from corporeal objects, and in different ways requiring renovation.

"The human soul, proceeding by emanation from the Deity, is an incorporeal substance of the same nature with the divine intellect. Being united to the body, one complex nature is produced, endued with reason, and capable of action. The human soul consists of four parts, *Nepheh*, or the principle of vitality; *Ruach*, or the

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this notion by the Jews in Egypt to their brethren in Palestine.

Simeon-ben-Jochai, a celebrated rabbi, was the first, who committed these mysteries to paper; and, as the Jews affirm, by divine assistance, he composed the Zohar, or brightness.* He is said to have lived some years before the destruction of Jerusalem. Titus condemned him to death; but he and his son escaped the persecution, by secreting themselves in a cave, where he had leisure to compose the abovementioned book. He perfected the work with the assistance of the prophet Elias, whom God sent from heaven, from

principle of motion; *Neschamah*, or the power of intelligence; and *Jechidah*, a divine principle, by means of which it contemplates superiour natures, and even ascends to the *Ensophic* world. All souls were produced at once, and pre-existed in Adam. Every human soul has two guardian angels, produced by emanation at the time of the production of souls.

"The mind of man is united to the divine mind, as the radius of a circle to its centre. The souls of good men ascend above the mansion of the angels, and are delighted with the vision of the first light, which illuminates all the worlds.

"The universe continues to exist by the divine energy of emanation. Whilst this energy is exerted, different forms and orders of beings remain; when it is withheld, all the streams of existence return into their fountain. The *Ensoph*, or Deity, contains all things within himself; and there is always the same quantity of existence, either in a created or uncreated state. When it is in an uncreated state, God is all; when worlds are created, the Deity is unfolded, or evolved, by various degrees of emanation, which constitute the several forms and orders of created nature."—*Enfield's Philosophy, Vol. II. p.* 217, 218, 219, 220, 221.

* David Levi calls the Zohar a cabbalistical commentary on the Pentateuch

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time to time, to explain to Simeon such mysteries as were above his comprehension.*

The *Sephir Jetzirah*, or book of the creation, is the next in cabbalistic fame to the Zohar; and is quoted by the Jews, as of divine authority. Some ascribe this work to the patriarch Abraham; others suppose it was written by the rabbi Akibha, who lived in the second century.

He was president of the academies of Lydda and Jafna; and a disciple and successor of the rabbi Gamaliel. Until he was forty years of age, he was a shepherd in the service of a rich citizen of Jerusalem; but his master's daughter having promised to marry him, if he became a learned man, he assiduously applied himself to study. So successful was his application, that he became one of the most famous teachers in the schools of Jewish learning. He was considered by his nation, as the oracle of the times; and one of the greatest preservers of the traditional law.† The Jews in Palestine did not scruple to say, that God revealed to him, what he concealed from Moses; and, if their accounts are to be credited, he had twenty four thousand disciples. This rabbi is mentioned with veneration through the whole Talmud; not only on account of

* Basnage, p. 185. † De Rossi's Hebrew Biography.

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his great attainments in the cabbalistical learning, but for his extraordinary abilities and wisdom in solving important questions in the law.* Towards the close of his life, he followed the standard of the impostor Barchocheba, who appeared under the character of the Messiah, to deliver his countrymen from the power of the emperour Adrian. An account of this revolt, and the new and dreadful calamities, which the Jews suffered in consequence of the insurrection, will be related in the following chapter.

CHAP. IV.

The Jews rebel in the reign of the emperour Trajan. They are subdued and banished from the isle of Cyprus. The emperour Adrian begins to rebuild Jerusalem, and plants a Roman colony in the new city. Rebellion of the Jews. Barchocheba declares himself the Messiah, and is made leader of the insurgents. He chooses the famous rabbi Akibba for his precursor. The rebels raise a formidable army. Adrian sends forces against them, and besieges them in Bither. This city surrenders to the Romans. The false Messiah is slain. Horrid carnage of the Jews. Multitudes of them are sold, and transported to Egypt. Adrian completes the building of Jerusalem, and prohibits the Jews from entering the city.

NOTWITHSTANDING the complicated afflictions, which the Jews suffered in Palestine during the destruction of their city and temple, the measure of their calamities was not completed. They had scarcely begun to breathe

* David Levi's Ceremonies of the Jews.

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after the ruin of their country, when their impatience under a foreign yoke broke out in an open revolt during the reign of the emperour Trajan, who had interdicted them from reading their law, and treated them with great severity.*

The rebellion was commenced by the Jews in Cyrene, where they had been settled for many years, and become powerful. At first, they gained considerable advantages over the enemy, who fled to Alexandria, and massacred all the Jews in the city. Those of Cyrene, exasperated at this dreadful reprisal, having chosen one Andrew for their commander, murdered two hundred and twenty thousand of the Lybians, and depopulated the country. The emperour Trajan sent Martius Turbo with a powerful army against them, and the rebels were reduced, after several desperate battles, which were attended with great slaughter.† A. D. 115.

The following year, the Jews in Mesopotamia, alarmed at the fate of their brethren in Egypt, appeared in arms, and with such force, that the inhabitants of the whole country were filled with consternation. This induced Trajan to send Lucius Quietus, the greatest general in the empire, against them, who slew 116.

* Basnage, p. 511. † Ibid.

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great numbers of the insurgents, and subjected the rest to the Roman power. To prevent their again assembling and rebelling, the emperour appointed him governour in Palestine, to watch their motions and keep them in awe.*

Soon after, the Jews, who were numerous in the island of Cyprus, made a more dreadful insurrection, and massacred two hundred and forty thousand of the inhabitants. Trajan sent Adrian, a famous general, against them, with a powerful army. After an obstinate conflict, the rebels were reduced, and the emperour published an edict, banishing them from the island, and forbidding them to return, under the severest penalties.†

A. D. 130. Notwithstanding the miseries, which the Jews suffered by their revolt, their rebellious spirit was still unsubdued. Adrian, the successor of Trajan, had prohibited them from circumcising their children; and sent a colony to rebuild Jerusalem, near the place where the ancient city stood. He designed to adorn it after the Roman style, and call it Elia Capitolina, from the name of his family. This exasperated the minds of the Jews, and stimulated them to commence an open rebellion.‡

* Basnage, p. 511. † Ibid, p. 512. ‡ Ibid.

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Coziba, one of the banditti, who infested Judea, and committed all kinds of violence against the Romans, was the leader of the insurgents. To facilitate the success of his bold enterprize, he assumed the name of Barchocheba, which signifies the son of a star; and pretended he was the person prophesied of by Balaam in the words, "There shall come a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel." This barbarian, so well calculated by his courage and enterprising spirit to be the Messiah, according to the perverted conceptions of the Jews, was acknowledged in that character by his infatuated countrymen.* He engaged to deliver his nation from the power of the emperour Adrian, and restore its ancient liberty and glory. The famous rabbi Akibha, being chosen by him for his precursor, espoused his cause, afforded him the protection of his name, and not only publickly anointed him as the Messiah, and king of the Jews, but placed a diadem on his head, caused money to be coined in his name, and followed him to the field, at the head of twenty thousand of his disciples, and acted in the capacity of master of his horse. By calling on A. D. 132.

* Several impostors had appeared before him; some under the title of the Messiah; others under that of his precursors; most of whom were the disciples of Judas the Gaulonite. But Barchocheba was the first, who obtained great celebrity.

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all the descendants of Abraham to assist the hope of Israel, an army of two hundred thousand men was soon raised, who repaired to Bither, a city near Jerusalem, chosen by the famous impostor for the capital of his new kingdom.*

Adrian at first neglected to take measures against the revolt, supposing the Jews had been too effectually humbled by his predecessor to be able so soon to raise a formidable insurrection. But being apprized, that numbers had flocked to the standard of Barchocheba, he sent Tinnius Rufus, governour of the province, with a powerful military force against them. The rebels, however, gained great advantages over the imperial army, and destroyed vast numbers of Romans and converted Jews. Their rapid success and sanguinary devastations, filled Rome with astonishment and consternation. At length, Julius Severus, one of the greatest generals of his age, was despatched to crush this dangerous revolt. This able commander, not thinking it prudent to oppose at once so formidable an army, attacked and defeated the insurgents in parties; and, at length, cut off the supplies of the enemy, and besieged them in Bither.†

* Basnage, p. 515. † Basnage, p. 518.

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The rebels defended themselves with obstinate resolution; and, even put Tryphon, a famous rabbi, to death, because he proposed their surrendering to the Romans. However, they were not able long to withstand the repeated and vigorous attacks, which were made upon the city. In one of these assaults, the pretended Messiah was killed, and Bither obliged to surrender. The Jewish history, bloody as it is in almost every page, records no fact, excepting the destruction of Jerusalem, more horrid, than the undistinguished and promiscuous slaughter which ensued. Akibha* and his son were put to a most cruel death. Five hundred and eighty thousand fell by the sword in battle, besides a vast number, who perished by famine, sickness, fire, and other calamities. The Jewish historians affirm, that a greater number were destroyed in this war, than the whole amount of their nation, when they emigrated from Egypt; and, that their sufferings, under Nebuchadnezzar and Titus, were not so great as those they endured under Adrian. Of these unhappy people, who survived the second ruin of their nation, vast numbers were exposed for sale at

* With him, say the Jews, perished the glory of their law. After his death, his tomb, which they suppose to have been at Tiberias, was visited with great solemnity.—*Enfield's Philosophy, Vol. II. p. 201.*

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the fair of Terebinth,* at the price of horses, and dispersed over the face of the earth. Those who could not find purchasers at this place, were removed to another fair, which was kept at Gaza; others were transported to Egypt.†

A. D. 136. After the war was terminated Adrian completed his design of rebuilding Jerusalem. In order to prevent new revolts among the Jews, he caused the ancient monuments of their religion to be destroyed, and studiously profaned all the places which they revered. He erected a theatre with the stones, which had been used for the temple, and dedicated a temple to Jupiter Capitolinus, where that of Jehovah formerly stood. He placed a hog of marble upon the gates of the city, on the side of Bethlehem; and, as he hated the Christians as well as the Jews, he erected a statue of Venus in the place where Christ was crucified; and in that where he arose from the dead, one of Jupiter. In the grotto of Bethlehem, where our Saviour was born, he established the worship of Adonis.‡

The emperour, by a severe edict, prohibited the Jews, upon pain of death, from enter-

* The fair of Terebinth was annually kept on the plain of Mamre, sacred for having been the place where Abraham pitched his tent, and where he received the heavenly guests. Gen. xviii. 17.

† Basnage, p. 519. ‡ Ibid.

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ing Jerusalem,* and fixed a vigilant garrison of the Roman cohorts to enforce the execution of his orders. He even forbade them to view their once beloved city at a distance. "Before this period," says a late author, "they were seen covered with rags, traversing, midst sighs and lamentations, the Mount of Olives, and the remains of their temple. They were reduced to the necessity of being economists in their misery to purchase this favour from the avarice of the soldiery. At this price they obtained, as a singular indulgence, permission to go thither and weep on the anniversary of the sacking of their city; and the Jews were obliged to pay for the right of shedding tears in those places where they purchased and shed the blood of Jesus Christ!"†

In the calamities of the Jews, we contemplate the fulfillment of the prophecies, which foretold them long before they took place. Moses had predicted, that they should be carried into Egypt, and sold at a very low price.

* Though Adrian interdicted the Jews from entering Jerusalem, they were not banished from Judea; the patriarchs still resided in that country, and the famous school of Tiberias still existed. The condition of those, who remained in Palestine, was, however, extremely wretched. According to Juvenal, some of the Jews in Rome and Egypt, after the revolt, were obliged to turn fortune-tellers for their subsistence.—*Basnage, p.* 519.

† Gregoire, in his Essay on the Reformation of the Jews, quotes as an authority for this fact, St. Jerome in Sophonian. Chap. X.

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"*And the Lord*,," said he, "*shall bring thee into Egypt again with ships, and ye shall be sold unto your enemies, and no man shall buy you.*" When Jerusalem was taken by Titus, the captives with their wives and children, were sold at the lowest price; and we learn from St. Jerome, "that after their last overthrow by Adrian, many thousands of them were sold; and those, who could not find purchasers, were transported into Egypt, and perished by shipwreck or famine, or were massacred by the inhabitants."*

CHAP. V.

State of the Jews in the East. Of the princes of the captivity. Judah the saint compiles the Misna. History of that work. Jews rebel under Marcus Antoninus. Marcus Aurelius renew Adrian's edict against them. They were treated with kindness by Septimius Severus. Of their state under Heliogabalus. They are favoured by Alexander Severus, and the subsequent Roman emperours.

WHILE the western Jews were exposed to the terrible calamities, which have been related in the preceding chapter, a milder destiny attended their brethren in the east. Trajan, indeed, had carried his arms against them as far as Mesopotamia; but Adrian, after his accession to the throne, consented, that the Euphrates should be the boundary of the Roman em-

* See Newton on the Prophecies, p. 70.

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pire. Those, therefore, who resided beyond that river, were not concerned in that prince's war against their nation. Many, however, who panted after liberty in the most remote provinces of the empire, passed into Judea to assist their brethren. Yet they answered no other purpose, but to augment the number of the slain,* and increase the triumph of the conquerors.†

The history of the eastern is more obscure, than that of the western Jews, the former having but an imperfect knowledge of the events which took place among their brethren in those remote countries. Previous to the destruction of the temple, those of that nation, who resided in the eastern countries, sent presents to Jerusalem; repaired thither from time to time, to pay their devotions; and acknowledged the supreme authority of the high priests. But after the ruin of their country, having no longer the band of unity, which was formed by the temple and high priests, they imitated their brethren in Palestine, and elevated chiefs to preside over their synagogues, whom they styled princes of the captivity.‡ A. D. 122.

* The number of the slain, according to Basnage, amounted to above six hundred thousand, which number could not have been found in Judea, after the sufferings of that country under Trajan.

† Basnage, p. 162.

‡ Modern Universal History, Vol. XIII. p. 156.

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The origin of these chiefs is not known ; it is only evident, that they did not exist till the second century. They were installed with great pomp and solemnity. Babylon or Bagdat was chosen for the place of their residence, where they presided over ten courts of justice. There were twenty eight synagogues, among which was that of the prince, supported with pillars of marble of various colours. His office was to confer ordination on all the heads of the synagogues in the east, from whom he received contributions to enable him to support his dignity, and pay the tribute which was exacted by the kings of Persia. It is believed that Huna, who was cotemporary with Judah the saint, was the first prince of the captivity at Babylon. These princes exercised the same authority in the eastern, that the patriarchs of Tiberias maintained in the western countries.*

The Jews, however, pretend, that these chiefs were superiour in power and dignity to the patriarchs of Judea, and affirm, that all, who remained of the race of David, abandoned that province, and retired to Babylon, where they conclude the sceptre mentioned by Jacob is to be found. But men of learning among the Christians have proved, that they have greatly

* Basnage, p. 162. Lewis's Hebrew Antiquities.

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exaggerated the grandeur and authority of these princes, who were subjected to the Persian monarchs. And, if we consider the low condition of the Jews, and the oppressions, which they endured from the Parthians, Romans, and other nations, it will appear evident, that the princes of the captivity could possess only a small share of authority.*

In order to raise the glory of their nation, the Jews bestow the highest encomiums on the learned men, who flourished among them during the second century. In particular, they extol the famous rabbi Judah,† the third Jewish patriarch, who obtained the appellation of saint. He was born in the city of Sephora, and having acquired great celebrity for his piety and profound learning, presided over the academy of Tiberias with uncontrolled authority, and decided the most abstruse controversies. His memory was so highly revered among the Jews, that they compare him with the Messiah; they relate many extraordinary accounts of this rabbi; among the rest, they assert, that he made the emperour, Marcus

* Modern Universal History, Vol. XIII. p. 180.

† Judah was born on the same day that Akibha died, and the Jews imagine this event was predicted by Solomon, when he says, *The sun riseth, and the sun goeth down.* Akibha dying was the sun that set, and Judah the saint the rising sun.—*Basnage, p.* 156.

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Antoninus, a proselyte to Judaism, and, that it was by his order, that Judah compiled the Misna.*

This celebrated book is a code of the Jewish canon and civil law. It was held in such profound veneration by the Jews, that they called it the second law, (which the name Misna signifies in Hebrew) importing, that it has the same authority with their Pentateuch or first law. Judah was induced to undertake this work from a just apprehension, that his nation, in their various dispersions and migrations through so many provinces, and during the interruption of their publick schools, would neglect to practise the rites of their religion; and the traditions of their fathers would be obliterated from their memory.†

"The history of the Misna," says Enfield,‡ "is briefly this: The sect of the Pharisees, after the destruction of Jerusalem, prevailing over the rest, the study of traditions became the chief object of attention in all the Jewish schools. The number of these traditions, had in a long course of time, so greatly increased, that the doctors, whose principal employment it was to illustrate them by new explanations, and to confirm their authority, found it neces-

* Enfield's Philosophy, Vol. II. p. 198.
† Basnage. Maurice's Indian Antiquities.
‡ Enfield's Philosophy, Vol. II. p. 198.

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sary to assist their recollections by committing them under distinct heads to writing. At the same time, their disciples took minutes of the explanations of their preceptors, many of which were preserved, and grew up into voluminous commentaries. The confusion, which arose from these causes, was now become so troublesome, that, notwithstanding what Hillel* had before done in arranging the traditions, Judah found it necessary to attempt a new digest of the oral law, and of the commentaries of the most famous doctors. This arduous undertaking is said to have employed him forty years. It was completed, according to the unanimous testimony of the Jews, about the close of the second century. This Misna, or first Talmud, comprehends all the laws, institutions, and modes of life, which, beside the Hebrew scriptures, the Jews supposed themselves bound to observe."†

This work was soon respected by the Jews as a sacred book. It consists of a variety of traditions, and explanations of several passages of scripture, and serves as a supplement to

* The name of Hillel is held in the highest esteem among the Jews, for his exertions to perpetuate the knowledge of the traditionary law. He arranged its precepts under six general classes, and thus laid the foundation for that digest of Jewish law, called the Talmud.—*Enfield's Philosophy.*

† Enfield.

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their written law. According to their account, these traditions were delivered to Moses, during his abode on Mount Sinai, and he afterwards communicated them to Aaron, Eleazar, and his servant Joshua. They transmitted them to the elders, who delivered them to the prophets; and they passed from Jeremiah to Baruch, and from him to Ezra, who delivered them to the grand synagogue, the last of whom was Simon the Just. Thus these traditions were handed down from generation to generation, in regular succession, till they were transmitted to Judah the saint, who committed them to writing, and thus formed the voluminous compilation styled Misna;* this work was taught in all the schools, both in Palestine and Babylon. Such is the account of David Levi,† and the creed of every rabbi.

Dr. Prideaux, rejecting the Jewish fiction, observes, that, "after the death of Simon the just, about two hundred ninety nine years before Christ, the Mischnical doctors arose; who, by their comments and conclusions, added to the number of those traditions, which had been received and allowed by Ezra, and the men of the great synagogue; so, that towards the mid-

* See a particular account of all the receivers of oral tradition, in David Levi's ceremonies of the Jews, from p. 276 to p. 286.

† David Levi's Ceremonies of the Jews.

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dle of the second century, under the empire of Antoninus Pius, it was found necessary to commit these traditions to writing, more especially, as the country had greatly suffered under Adrian, many of the schools had been dissolved, and their learned men cut off; and, therefore, the usual method of preserving these traditions had failed.*

The Misna of Judah did not, however, resolve all the doubtful cases and questions, which were agitated by the Jews; and it was thought to need some larger explanation to render it more intelligible. This induced Jochanan, a celebrated doctor of the Jewish law, with the assistance of two disciples of Judah, to write a commentary on the Misna. This work was called the Talmud of Jerusalem, because it was composed in Judea, for the use of the Jews, who remained in that country.

In the second century, several new sects were formed among the Jews, while those remained, which had figured in the time of our Saviour. The Gaulonites still retained their seditious spirit against all foreign government. But the Pharisees had, since the destruction of Jerusalem, formed the bulk of the nation. The Hemero-Baptists were a branch of this denomi-

* Prideaux's Connection.

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nation, only distinguished by their more frequent washings. The Masbotheans, were a branch of the Sadducees, for they denied the immortality of the soul, and attributed all events to chance. The Hellenists were the Jews, who spoke Greek, and read the Septuagint in the synagogues. Though there was at first some jealousy between them and their brethren, who performed publick worship in the Hebrew language, they were allowed to use the Greek translation in their religious assemblies. But, after they found, that the Christians, in disputing against Judaism, derived advantage from the Septuagint version, their prejudice against it was heightened, and those who vindicated it were regarded by the other party, as sectarians and schismaticks.*

The edict of Adrian, which prohibited the Jews from circumcising their children, being still in force, their impatience under this restriction stimulated them, notwithstanding their late calamities, again to have recourse to arms. The emperour Antoninus, however, soon suppressed the revolt; and afterwards restored to them the privilege, for which they contended, and treated them with great moderation and kindness. He, however, forbade

* Basnage, p. 528.

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their attempting to make proselytes to their religion.

In the commencement of the reign of Marcus Aurelius, the eastern Jews, who were subjects of the king of Parthia, joined that monarch in a war against the Romans. The emperour, incensed at this conduct, after he had reduced the rebels, renewed Adrian's severe edict against them. But those laws were not executed in the remote provinces.*

The emperour Septimius Severus in the commencement of his reign, declared war against the Samaritans and Jews. They had settlements in Galilee; but the prohibition, which excluded them from entering the precincts of Jerusalem, was still in force. This unhappy people, though so often humbled and subdued, attempted once more to repel their enemies, and invaded Samaria and Judea. After the emperour had reduced them to obedience, he relaxed his severity against them. In order to reward their fidelity to him, when Pescennius Niger was competitor for the throne, he allowed them the privileges of Roman citizens, and rendered them eligible to offices of trust and honour.† A. D. 197.

The chiefs and doctors of the eastern Jews obtained celebrity in the commencement of the

* Basnage, p. 523. † Ibid, 531.

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third century, and established academies in various parts. After the Persian monarchy was
A. D. 200. restored, and the Parthian overthrown, the rabbies were for some time treated with great respect. At this prosperous period, Samuel Jarchi, who was famed for his literary acquirements, particularly for his skill in astronomy, came from Judea, was constituted chief of an academy at Nahardea; and among other dignities obtained that of prince of the captivity.*

The tranquillity, which the Jews enjoyed in the east proved, however, only a prelude to a violent persecution, which Sapor, king of Persia, commenced against them. According to the Jewish historians, he was instigated by his subjects, who, being jealous of the influence of their nation, endeavoured to effect their destruction.

The scene was reversed, and their affairs assumed a favourable aspect under Zenobia, queen of Palmyra. During the reign of this celebrated princess, they flourished in every part of her dominions; erected superb synagogues, and were exalted to the highest dignities. But, after this heroine was subdued by Aurelian, they retired from her dominions to Persia.†

* Basnage, p. 531. † Ibid, 533.

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Heliogabalus, who at this time ascended the throne, had been circumcised, and abstained from swine's flesh. He, however, erected a superb temple in honour of the sun, the idol he worshipped. He ordered the palladium, the vestal fire, the mother of the gods, and whatever the Romans held in the highest veneration, to be conveyed to this temple. Being well acquainted with the tenets of the Samaritans and Jews, he intended to blend their religious rites with the adoration of his deity. The unexpected death of this emperour, who was assassinated by his soldiers, delivered the Jews, who never would have consented to adopt his religion, from the fiery trial which awaited them.* A. D. 218.

Alexander Severus, who succeeded Heliogabalus, highly favoured the Jews, corresponded with them, and was instructed in their religion. This emperour had a domestic chapel, where he placed the statues of Abraham, of Orpheus, and of Christ. He was desirous of erecting a temple to Christ, and receiving him into the number of gods. His object was by the aid of the Eclectic philosophy to blend the Pagan, Jewish, and Christian religions.†

* Basnage, p. 533.

† Basnage, p. 532. Gibbon's Roman Empire, Vol. II. p. 305.

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The subsequent Pagan Roman emperours continued the tranquillity which the Jews enjoyed. In particular Philip, who was born in Arabia, where they carried on commercial pursuits, treated them with the greatest indulgence. And it does not appear, that they were involved in any of the violent persecutions which the Christians suffered during the reigns of Decius, Valerian, and Dioclesian.*

It seems from the preceding account, that the Jews enjoyed intervals of tranquillity, and were treated with kindness and indulgence by several of the Pagan emperours of Rome. The numerous remains of this people, though they were still excluded from the precincts of Jerusalem, were permitted to form and maintain considerable establishments, both in Italy, and in the provinces; to acquire the freedom of Rome, to enjoy municipal honours, and to obtain at the same time, an exemption from the hard and burdensome offices of society. The moderation of the Romans gave a legal sanction to the forms of ecclesiastical police which were instituted by the vanquished sect. New synagogues were erected in the principal cities in the empire, and the institutions and rites of the Mosaic law were celebrated in the most publick and solemn manner.†

* Basnage, p. 533. † Gibbon, Vol. II. p. 337.

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Alexander Severus and his successors in particular treated the Jews with great clemency. But, as it will appear in the following parts of this history, when the christian princes were at the head of the Roman empire, they did not shew so much indulgence to a nation, whom they considered as the inveterate enemies of Jesus Christ.

CHAP. VI.

State of the Jews under Constantine and his successors. The emperour Julian highly favoured this people, and proposed to assist them in rebuilding the temple of Jerusalem. Of the vast preparations which were made for this purpose, and the supposed miracle which caused, as is said, his design to be abandoned.

In the fourth century, one of the most important revolutions took place, that ever was known in the annals of mankind. The splendid edifice of Pagan superstition was subverted, and christianity established under Constantine the great and his successors. During the reign of this monarch the city of Jerusalem, which Adrian called Elia, resumed its ancient name. The emperour enlarged and beautified it with many superb buildings and churches; and his pious munificence extended to every spot which had been consecrated by the footsteps of the apostles and prophets, and of the Son of God.*

* Gibbon, Vol. IV.

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This important change in the religion of the Roman empire did not prove advantageous to the Jews. Constantine, in the commencement of his reign, enacted some severe laws, which abridged their privileges. Their increasing numbers and prosperity having rendered them insolent, they insulted and abused those who deserted the synagogue and embraced christianity. The emperour charged them with stoning and burning those who renounced their religion; and condemned them and all their accomplices to suffer the same punishment. He also forbade them to make proselytes under the severest penalties; and gave liberty to all the slaves, who accused their masters of having circumcised them, or who professed the christian religion. He further ordered, that they should be obliged to serve at all publick offices, like the other subjects of the empire, from which, however, he exempted the patriarchs, priests, and others, who officiated at the synagogues, schools, &c.*

The council of Elvira in Spain, which is commonly placed in the reign of Constantine, prohibited the Christians, who had been in habits of social intercourse with the Jews, from eating with them in future. Though the penalty fell only on the Christians, who were made

* Basnage, p. 354.

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liable to excommunication, it subjected the unhappy Israelites to insults and contempt. By another decree this council prohibited the possessors of land to permit them to bless the fruits of the earth,* because their benedictions would render those of the Christians useless. The council threatened to expel from the church those, who refused to obey these orders.†

During the reign of Constantine, the Jews were numerous in Persia, and having experienced great kindness and liberality from many of the sovereigns in that kingdom, had acquired great influence at court. Emboldened by their prosperity, and stimulated by a desire of revenging the insults and indignities they suffered in the Roman empire, they in conjunction with the Magi raised a bloody persecution against the eastern Christians. Many were slaughtered at their instigation, their churches demolished, their sacred books burnt, and, as the persecution was long as well as bloody, every trace of christianity was nearly obliterated.‡

The cruelty of the Jews did not long remain unpunished. Constantius, who succeed- A. D. 341.

* The Jews in this country appear to have been tenants to the Christians. They had publick prayers in their synagogues for divine blessings on their grounds.—*Jortin's Remarks on Ecclesiastical History, Vol. II. p. 294.*

† Basnage, p. 544. ‡ Ibid.

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ed his father, and hated this people on account of their religion, treated them with the utmost rigour. During his reign they raised an insurrection in Diocæsarea in Palestine in order to cooperate with the Persians, who at the same time invaded the Roman empire, and laid siege to Nisibis. The emperour sent an army, who took Judea in their way to Persia, defeated the rebels, and destroyed the city.*

Soon after, Constantius, incensed against the Jewish nation, not only revived the laws which had been enacted against them in the former reigns, but added new ones still more severe. Every Jew that married a Christian, circumcised a slave, or retained any who were Christians, was punished with death. The Jewish patriarch, who was still permitted to exercise a precarious jurisdiction, held his residence at Palestine; and the neighbouring cities were filled with a people who fondly adhered to the promised land. But the edict of Adrian, which exiled them from Jerusalem, was renewed and enforced; and they viewed from afar the walls of the holy city, which was profaned in their eyes by the triumph of the cross, and the devotion of the Christians.†

The death of Constantius delivered the Jews from the evils they endured. Their af-

* Basnage, p. 544.

† Basnage. Gibbon's Roman History, Vol. IV. p. 99.

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fairs assumed a more favourable aspect, when Julian, styled the apostate, was elevated to the imperial dignity. As it was his determined purpose to subvert the Christian, and restore the Pagan worship, his aversion to the Christians induced him to treat the Jews with distinguished kindness and liberality. He allowed them the free exercise of their religion; and exempted them from the heavy taxes which were imposed upon them by his predecessors. Emboldened by such powerful protection, they assembled in several cities in Syria and Judea; demolished the churches, and committed other outrages. Their example was followed by their brethren in Egypt, who destroyed the finest churches in Alexandria.*

Julian established the Pagan religion by law; disqualified the Christians from bearing offices in the state; fined and banished their clergy; forbade them to teach the sciences in the publick schools; imposed a tax on all who refused to sacrifice to idols; and in short used every method that human ingenuity could invent, to destroy the christian religion. But finding his attempts baffled by the inflexible firmness of the Christians, he formed the famous design of rebuilding the temple of Je-

* Basnage, p. 546.

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rusalem. Its final destruction had been foretold by Christ and the prophets; and it was as he imagined, reserved for him to falsify their predictions; and he meant to have converted the success of his undertaking into a specious argument against the faith of prophecy and truth of revelation.*

In pursuance of his general design of opposing revelation to itself by setting one sect against another, the emperour addressed a publick epistle to the nation or community of the Jews, dispersed throughout the provinces. In this letter he honours the patriarch with the title of brother. He compassionates their misfortunes, praises their constancy, declares himself their gracious protector, and concludes with a promise, that, if he should return victorious from the Persian war, he would rebuild Jerusalem, and pay his grateful vows to the deity in that holy place.†

The prospect of an immediate and important advantage would not suffer the impatient monarch to await the remote and uncertain event of a Persian war. He resolved to erect a stately temple on the commanding summit of Moriah; to establish an order of priests, whose interested zeal would detect the arts, and resist the ambition of their christian ri-

* Basnage, p. 546. † Warburton's Julian.

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vals; and to invite a numerous colony of Jews, whose stern fanaticism would be always prepared to second, and even anticipate the hostile measures of the Pagan government.*

For this purpose, the emperour assigned immense sums out of the publick revenue; and committed the superintendency of the plan to Alypus, his intimate friend, whose aversion to christianity was congenial to his own. This minister, having obtained the strenuous support of the governour of Palestine, provided immense quantities of materials, and large numbers of workmen. To use the words of a celebrated author, "At the call of their great deliverer, the Jews from all the provinces of the empire assembled on the holy mountain of their fathers; and their insolent triumph alarmed and exasperated the christian inhabitants of Jerusalem. The desire of rebuilding the temple has in every age been the ruling passion of the children of Israel. In this propitious moment, the men forgot their avarice, and the women their delicacy; spades and pick-axes of silver were provided by the vanity of the rich, and the rubbish transported in mantles of silk and purple. Every purse was opened in liberal contributions, every hand claimed a share in

* Gibbon, Vol. IV. p. 105. Warburton's Julian.

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the pious labour, and the commands of a great monarch were executed by the enthusiasm of a whole people."*

A. D. 363. On this occasion, however, the power of Julian, who had all the resources of the empire at his command, and the enthusiasm of the Jews were unsuccessful; it is attested by several respectable writers, that while the workmen were digging up the foundations of the temple, terrible earthquakes and balls of fire broke forth, which obliged them to desist, and caused a total suppression of the work.†

The most unexceptionable testimony to this extraordinary fact is that of Ammianus Marcellinus, a celebrated Pagan historian, who was a friend and admirer of Julian. This writer, in his history of his own times, has thus recorded the obstacles which interposed to interrupt the restoration of the temple of Jerusalem: "Whilst Alypus, assisted by the governour of the province, urged with vigour and diligence the execution of the work, horrible balls of fire, breaking out near the foundations with frequent and reiterated attacks, rendered the place from time to time inaccessible to the scorched and blasted workmen; and the victorious element continuing in this manner obstinately and resolutely bent, as it were to

* Gibbon, Vol. IV. p. 106. † Basnage, p. 546.

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drive them to a distance, the undertaking was relinquished."*

This wonderful event is also attested with some variations† by Ambrose, Chrysostom, and Gregory Nazianzen, cotemporary christian writers, the last of whom published his account of the miracle before the expiration of the same year, and has boldly declared, that this preternatural event was not disputed by the infidels. The subsequent writers, who relate this extraordinary fact, are the historians Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret.‡

In latter times the truth of this miracle has been maintained by some writers of high reputation in the republick of letters; particularly the learned bishop Warburton, who has published an ingenious treatise in order to prove the miraculous interposition of providence in defeating the attempt to rebuild the temple of Jerusalem.

In defence of the truth of this miraculous interposition, it has been alleged, that it differs from the pretended miracles of those days, that it was not wrought to serve a party. No sect could claim any honour or credit from

* Ammianus Marcellinus, Lib. 23. Chap 1. p. 380.

† All, however, agree in the principal points.

‡ See Warburton's Julian, and Jortin's Remarks.

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it; but it was performed by providence for the credit of christianity, and to serve the common cause against Judaism and Paganism.*

Others, particularly Mr. Basnage and Dr. Lardner, have expressed their doubts respecting the truth of this miracle.† The latter of these writers judiciously observes, "Julian's intention (or desire at least) to rebuild the city of Jerusalem and the Jewish temple, was never accomplished, but was frustrated and defeated. Whether it was owing to miraculous interposition, or to his expensive preparations for the Persian war, and other circumstances of his affairs, and to his defeat and death in that war, the overruling providence of God ought to be acknowledged in the event; and the argument for the truth of the christian religion, taken from the fulfillment of our Saviour's prediction in the destruction of Jerusalem, and the overthrow of the Jewish people by Vespasian and Titus, and their continued dispersion, remains in all its force."‡

* Jortin's Remarks, Vol. II. p. 327.

† The reader is referred to Basnage's History of the Jews, and to Vol. VIII. of Lardner's Jewish and Heathen Testimonies, for the reasons on which they ground their disbelief of this miracle.

‡ Lardner's Jewish and Heathen Testimonies, Vol. VIII. p. 393.

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CHAP. VII.

State of the Jews under Valentinian and Valens. During the reign of Theodosius they insult the Christians at the feast of Purim. Edicts of Theodosius II. A false Messiah appears in Candia. Tumult in Alexandria. Violent behaviour of Cyril, bishop of that city. Jews in the west favoured by Honorious. Reputed conversion of those in Minorca. Suppression of the Jewish patriarchs. State of the Jews after the eruption of the barbarous nations into the Roman empire.

THE reign of Jovian, who succeeded Julian, was too short to affect any material alteration in the condition of the Jews. Valentinian, who, under the reign of an apostate, had signalized his zeal for the honour of christianity, granted a general toleration to his subjects. The Pagans, the Jews, and all the various sects which acknowledged the divine authority of Christ, were protected by the laws from arbitrary power and popular insult. He prohibited the Jewish synagogues from being profaned, plundered, and demolished. Under his reign and that of Valens, the Jewish patriarchs were restored to the enjoyment of all their privileges. However, Valens deprived this people of one great advantage, by revoking the decree which had exempted them from publick offices.* A. D. 387.

The Jews enjoyed a peaceable interval during the reigns of Gratian, Theodosius, and Arcadius. Theodosius I. granted them par-

* Basnage, p. 547.

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ticular jurisdiction; and besides their civil and publick judge, they had the power of electing officers and magistrates of their own persuasion. They possessed also authority to execute the decrees, which were passed respecting the religion and discipline of their brethren. The tranquillity which they enjoyed under Theodosius was, however, disturbed by some bigotted Christians, who caused one of their synagogues to be burnt; but upon complaint being made to the emperour, he ordered it to be rebuilt. St. Ambrose, it is said, justified the outrage, and was highly offended with the emperour for protecting an unbelieving nation.*

During the reign of Theodosius II. the liberal treatment which the Jews had long experienced emboldened them to offer an insult to the established religion. Being assembled to celebrate the feast of Purim, instead of hanging a figure of Haman on a high gibbet, as had been their common custom, they presumed to fix it on a cross, and with their usual execrations burnt the cross and the figure. The emperour being apprized of their insolent behaviour, prohibited their erecting and burning such gibbets, under the penalty of being deprived of all their privileges. The Jews generally obeyed; but those of Macedon and

* Basnage, p. 547. Jortin's Remarks on Ecclesiastical History.

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Dacia continued their insults of this kind; which the christian magistrates retaliated by burning their houses and synagogues, and putting their leaders to death.*

In order to suppress these disorders, the emperour issued an edict, forbidding the Christians to burn the synagogues, and the Jews to offer insults to the established religion. About three years after, those of Inmestar, a city in Chalcis, being inflamed with wine at the feast of Purim,† fastened a young Christian to a gibbet, who died in consequence of their cruel treatment. The Christians, exasperated at this conduct, took arms, and the Jews being numerous in that country, a bloody engagement ensued, in which many of both parties were killed. At length the governour of the province was ordered by the emperour to punish the instigators of these disorders, and an end was put to the tumult.‡ A. D. 408.

The Christians, however, still continued to plunder and burn their synagogues, and appropriate their goods to the use of the church, particularly at Antioch, where the Jews were

* Basnage, p. 550.

† The Jews celebrate the feast of Purim by drinking much wine, because they say by means of a wine banquet Esther made the king so good humoured, that he was induced to grant her request.—*Prideaux's Connection.*

‡ Basnage, p. 151.

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numerous and affluent. Upon complaint being made to Theodosius, he ordered the people to restore what they had taken, and erect new synagogues. But he was induced to repeal this equitable act at the instigation of the famed saint in the air, Simon Stylites,* who was in high esteem with the clergy, and exerted all the influence he had acquired by the fame of his sanctity, to prevent restitution being made. After Theodosius had revoked his orders, the Christians of Antioch and the neighbouring provinces were emboldened to commit new acts of violence against the Jews. The emperour was obliged in 425 to publish an explanation of his former edicts, in order to suppress the cruelty and injustice, which the revocation of his late decree caused the bigotted people to inflict upon this unhappy nation.

A. D. 432. The Jews were numerous in the island of Candia, and had acquired wealth. About this time an impostor appeared, who pretended to be a second Moses, sent to deliver his people. He promised to divide the sea, and afford them a safe passage through it to their own

* Simon was a Syrian, who derived his appellation from his living on the top of a pillar, where he is said to have continued thirty seven years. This fanatick had thus acquired a most shining reputation, and attracted the veneration of all about him. It has been said, that the emperour wrote a polite letter to him in which he styles him the *holy martyr in the air.*—*Basnage, p.* 551.

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land. During one year he passed through every town and village in the island, and persuaded his countrymen to meet him on the day, and at the place appointed. They collected as much of their effects as they were able to carry, and having assembled with their wives and children, he led them to the top of a rock, and commanded them to cast themselves into the sea. The men, with unshaken faith, instantly obeyed, and the women and children followed with equal ardour. Many were drowned; others were saved by christian fishermen. They became sensible of their infatuation, and endeavoured to seize the impostor; but he had the address to elude the search, which led them to suspect that he was the devil. Ashamed of their blind credulity, many were induced to embrace the profession of christianity.*

The city of Alexandria was computed to contain about one hundred thousand Jews, who had early distinguished themselves by their dexterity in trade, and like the other Egyptians were mutinous and seditious. At this time they appear to have been greatly relaxed in the strictness of their religious habits; and a number of them, instead of attending the A. D. 415.

* Basnage, p. 551.

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synagogues on the sabbath, chose to be present at the publick diversions, which were exhibited on that day. On these occasions frequent dissensions took place between them and the Christians, which seldom terminated without bloodshed. Cyril, the bishop of the city, was ardent in the prosecution of heresy, and entertained, in particular, an extreme aversion against the Jews, whom he threatened with ecclesiastical execution. But confiding in the protection of Orestes, the governour of Alexandria, who was their friend and patron, they despised the menaces of the bishop.

An altercation having taken place with the Christians, the Jews resolved to attack them in the middle of the night. For this purpose they despatched several persons through the streets of the city, who exclaimed, that the principal church was in flames. Alarmed at this outcry, the Christians came hastily out unarmed; and the Jews, who distinguished them by some peculiar marks, immediately attacked them, and many were slain in this tumult.* Exasperated at this outrage, Cyril, without waiting for a legal sentence, led a seditious multitude to the attack of the synagogues, which they levelled with the ground. They then entered the

* Basnage, p. 551.

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houses, and, without making any distinction between the guilty and the innocent, plundered them of all their goods, which were appropriated to the use of the church. They next compelled the remnant of the unbelieving nation to abandon the city almost naked, and Alexandria was impoverished by the loss of an industrious and wealthy colony.*

Orestes was enraged at this infringement upon his authority. The people also declared against the proceedings of the bishop, and endeavoured to persuade him to submit to the governour. But he resolutely refused, and, taking the gospel in his hand, endeavoured to intimidate him to a reconciliation. Upon finding Orestes inflexible, he commanded a regiment of monks,† amounting to fifteen hundred, to descend from the mountains, and attack him in his chariot. Accordingly, having first reviled, they assaulted and dangerously wounded him. His life, however, was preserved by the people, who repaired to his assistance, rescued him out of the hands of the monks, and compelled them to provide for their safety by flight. After the tumult was appeased, Orestes caused Ammo-

* Basnage, p. 532.

† Cyril kept a standing army of dragoons, namely, the Egyptian monks and Alexandrian ecclesiasticks, who were always ready to fight his battles.—*Jortin's Remarks on Ecclesiastical History, Vol. III. p.* 106.

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nius, the principal offender, to be put to death, and sent an account of the whole transaction to his court. Cyril, also wrote to the emperour to justify his conduct; and in his next sermon declared Ammonius a martyr in the cause of christianity.*

The indiscreet zeal of Cyril produced a new commotion in which many persons lost their lives; and an atrocious murder gave additional horrours to this sedition. Hypatia, daughter of Theon, a celebrated astronomer, publickly taught philosophy in the Platonic school at Alexandria, where her father had presided. This lady, who was eminently distinguished for her virtue, talents, and learning, had obtained great celebrity, and attracted a crowded audience. Orestes was in the habit of consulting her in all difficult cases, and paid great deference to her judgment. She was, however, a Pagan, and being suspected of hindering a reconciliation between the governour and Cyril, was assaulted by the fanatical populace, and barbarously assassinated before one of the christian churches. It is even said, that Cyril, who detested her religion, who was jealous of her reputation, and suspected her of taking an

* Basnage, p. 556. Jortin's Remarks on Ecclesiastical History, Vol. III. p. 106.

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active part against him, instigated his followers to put her to death.*

While the bishop of Alexandria exhibited this intolerant spirit, a Roman monarch displayed the liberality of a more enlightened period. The Jews in the west, under the protection of Honorius, enjoyed the full exercise of their religion. This emperour enacted a law, which exhibited his generous and extensive views, importing that the real glory of a prince consisted in allowing all his subjects of different religious sentiments, the full and peaceable enjoyment of all their rights and privileges. Agreeably to this decree, he expressly prohibited the destruction of synagogues, and the appropriation of them to any other purposes. He also gave orders, that they should not be compelled to violate the sabbath on account of their publick services, alleging that the rest of the week was sufficient for secular purposes. He disapproved of the unjust A. D. 412.

* Basnage, p. 553.

Dupin and some other ecclesiastical writers endeavour to vindicate Cyril, and clear him from being concerned in the murder. But a learned writer observes, "if there be not sufficient evidence to condemn him as author of the murder, neither is there room to acquit him. If he was innocent he should at least have excommunicated those who were concerned in this vile assassination; but it does not appear that this was done; and neither Socrates nor Valerius have said one word in his vindication."—*Jortin's Remarks, Vol. III. p.* 155.

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calumnies which were raised against this people; and commanded the governours of provinces to do them justice by resisting all the encroachments which had been, and should in future be made upon their privileges. He also allowed them to retain Christians in their service, provided they left them at entire liberty to fulfil the duties of their religion.* On the other hand, to prevent the Jews from abusing their liberty, the emperour prohibited their building new synagogues, and making proselytes; and deprived them of some offices† which they formerly enjoyed in the empire.

A. D. 428. The celebrated but disputed conversion of the Jews in Minorca, is said to have taken place in the fifth century. There were two considerable towns in this island; and the Hebrews were interdicted from that, in which the christian bishop resided. It is even related, that those who presumed to enter it were generally punished with sudden and miraculous death. The other was chiefly inhabited by the Jews who, under Honorius, enjoyed very considerable and lucrative offices. Theodosius, president of the synagogue, and doctor

* Basnage, p. 557.

† The Jews were admitted into the Roman troops for four centuries; they continued on the same footing till the emperour Honorius thought proper to declare them incapable of military service.—*Gregoire's Essay on the Reformation of the Jews.*

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of the law, was the principal person in the island. Severus, the bishop, was persuaded by Orosius, who had lately returned from Jerusalem, loaded with miraculous relics, to attempt their conversion. They began with private, and proceeded to publick conference in the synagogue. The Christians, being apprized that the Jewish women intended to assault them, provided for their defence. A tumult ensued, in which the synagogue was destroyed. It is said, however, that the bishop exhibited such a number of miracles, that their principal men were induced to relent, and in the course of eight days the greatest part of the Jews were converted to the christian faith, and their synagogue to a church. But some, who continued obstinate and intractable, concealed themselves in caverns, till hunger compelled them to quit their retreats; others, leaving their property behind them, sought an asylum in foreign countries. These facts clearly demonstrate that compulsory means had been used to effect a conversion.*

The Jews sustained a severe affliction in the fifth century, by the office of patriarch, which had kept up a centre of unity among them, being abolished by the imperial law. Those chiefs were supported by taxes levied upon A. D. 429.

*Basnage, p. 558. Modern Universal History, Vol. XIII.

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the Jewish people, which, at length, became so exorbitant, that they applied to the civil power for relief. Instead, however, of obtaining redress, they had the mortification of seeing the tribute converted to the emperour's use; and as there was no income to support the dignity, it became extinct. After this period the western Jews were solely under the direction of the chiefs of the synagogues, whom they called Primates.*

The fifth century was remarkable for the eruption of the barbarous nations upon the western empire. Yet the Jews only participated in the calamities which usually attend great revolutions. Under the Vandals they were allowed the free exercise of their religion, and on the payment of tribute were permitted the freedom of commerce. One of the effects of the invasion was the destruction of trade, which those barbarians, who delighted in war, held in little estimation. Commerce was therefore transferred to a people, who were generally treated with ignominy and contempt, and precluded from enjoying titular dignities, and civil and military offices.†

* Theodosius and Valentinian deprived the patriarchs of their office, and applied the taxes which were levied for their support to the imperial treasury. Honorius also published, at the end of the fourth century a law upon the same subject.—*Basnage, p. 556.*

† Basnage, p. 560. Anderson on Commerce.

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After the Goths obtained possession of Italy, the Jews continued to be protected by those barbarous kings. Theodoret, in particular, deserves high commendation for the liberality of his conduct. During his reign, the Jews had formed establishments at Naples, Rome, Milan, and Genoa, for the benefit of trade, and under the sanction of the laws. Yet their persons were insulted; their effects pillaged by the populace of Ravenna and Rome, upon the most frivolous, or extravagant pretensions. Theodoret endeavoured to rectify these abuses; he defended them against the christian Zealots, and forbade any compulsory measures to be employed for their conversion. He reproved the senate for suffering one of their synagogues to be burnt at Rome; and the clergy of Milan for attempting to seize upon another.* When the citizens of Genoa deprived them of the privileges which they had for a long time enjoyed among them, they sought redress from Theodoret, who permitted them to rebuild their synagogues, and restored to them the free exercise of their civil and religious rights. Thus the Jews concluded the fifth century in the Roman empire; though they had frequently suffered from the violent

* Basnage, p. 561. Gibbon, Vol. V. p. 29.

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tumults and animosities of the people; yet the authority of their sovereigns enabled them to preserve some of their most important privileges.*

CHAP. VIII.

Of the Jewish academies in the east. Rabbi Asce begins to compile the Talmud of Babylon. An account of the Masora. Persecution of the Jews in Persia during the fifth and sixth century. Of the Sebureans and Gaons. State of the Jews under the Persian monarchs. Their attempt upon Tyre. Of their state in the west. Justinian's edicts against them. Appearance of a false Messiah. Revolt in Cesarea. The Jews assist the Goths against Justinian. They raise an insurrection in Antioch. Conversion of those in the island of Cyprus.

THE Jewish academies in the east were towards the close of the fifth century in a flourishing condition, under the direction of rabbi Ascé, who was eminently distinguished for his talents and learning. He was born at Sora in Babylon, and at the early age of fourteen was chosen president of the celebrated academy in that city, which office he enjoyed sixty years. He died in 427.

After having taught with the highest reputation forty years, he began a collection of the sayings, debates, and decisions of the rabbis from the time of Judah the saint to the period in which he lived. He arranged thirty five books; but his death prevented his completing

* Basnage, p. 561. Gibbon, Vol. V. p. 29.

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the work. However, it was at length finished by his disciples, and styled the Talmud of Babylon.* This collection, like the Talmud of Jerusalem, comprises the Misna, which is the text, and is common to both; and the Gemara or commentary, which is called the completion. The Jews entertain the highest veneration for this work ;† a learned writer of their nation styles it, "a complete system of all their learning, and a comprehensive rule of all the practical parts of their laws and religion."‡

Rabbi Asce left a son called Huna, and two celebrated disciples, who were to have finished the Babylonian Talmud. But the work was retarded by a violent persecution which raged in

* It is so called from its being the production of the Babylonian schools, as the Talmud of Jerusalem derives its name from its being compiled for the Jews in Palestine. This consists of the Misna of Judah the saint, and the Gemara of Jochanan. The Talmud of Babylon consists of the same Misna, with the Gemara of rabbi Asce. On the subject of these Gemaras, a distinguished Jew has remarked, that "being nothing more than a collection of sentiments, parables, and legal determinations of the several great men of their schools at different times, the two Gemaras may be considered as one, and the Babylonish only a continuation of the Jerusalem. It is true, however, says he, the former is that intended to be designated by the generic expression of Talmud; but only because, as being later and more complete than that of Jerusalem, it comprises the last."—*Adams' Religious World displayed, Vol. I. p. 33.*

† It has even been said, that though they affirm the Scripture, the Misna and Gemara to be equally of divine authority, they compare the Scripture to water, the Misna to wine, and the Gemara to the choicest wine.—*Basnage, p.* 168.

‡ David Levi's Ceremonies of the Jews, p. 310.

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Persia against the Jewish nation, and which is said to have continued seventy three years. The synagogues were shut, the observation of the sabbath prohibited, and the schools and chapels given to the Magi. Huna, who was then the Jewish chief, and his two disciples were imprisoned, and suffered death with astonishing constancy. But the youthful part of the community, being more attached to the pleasures of life, were easily induced to apostatize from their religion; and their example was followed by a general defection in Israel.*

The compilation of the Talmud was, however, resumed by the learned men of the nation, and it is generally supposed, that it was completed in the sixth century. This work was received with high applause by the Jews, who agreed that no addition or diminution should be made to it for the future. But a new order of doctors arose, called Sebureans or Sceptics, who professed to doubt of every thing, and opposed the infallibility, which their brethren attributed to the Talmud.†

After the Jews had lost their existence as a nation, they were solicitous to preserve the purity and integrity of their sacred books. For this purpose a number of learned rabbis compiled a work, styled the Masora, in which

* Basnage, p. 562. † Ibid.

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they first fixed the true reading of the Hebrew text by vowels and accents; and, secondly, numbered not only the chapters and sections, but even the verses, words, and letters of the Old Testament. A late learned writer has styled this work "the most stupendous monument in the whole history of literature, of minute and persevering labour."* The Jews call the Masora "the hedge, or fence of the law," because the enumeration of the verses, &c. is a mean of preserving it from being altered or corrupted.

They assert, that when God gave the law to Moses on Mount Sinai, he taught him the true reading, which was handed down by oral tradition from age to age, till it was committed to writing. Elias Levita, a celebrated rabbi, who bestowed twenty years labour on explaining the Masora, makes the first compilers of it the Jewish doctors of the famous school of Tiberias, about five hundred years after Christ.†

The age in which the Masorites arose has, however, been much disputed. Some writers placed their origin in the sixth century; and others maintained, that they did not appear till the tenth. Basnage asserts, that they were not a society, but a succession of men; and

* Butler's Horæ Biblicæ, p. 57. † Jennings' Lect. Vol. I. p. 401.

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that the Masora was the work of many grammarians, who, without associating and communicating their notions, composed this collection of criticisms on the Hebrew text.*

The sixth century commenced with a violent persecution of the Jews in the east, under Cavades, a prince of a cruel and imperious disposition, who attempted to compel all his subjects to embrace the Persian religion. The celebrated Meir, a learned rabbi, lived at this time, and, exasperated at the severe treatment of his brethren, declared war against the king of Persia. It is said, that with four hundred men only, he successfully contended against him seven years. At length, however, he was defeated and put to death. The Persians then entered the city in which Zeutra, the prince of
A. D. 522. the captivity, resided, and having pillaged it, caused him and the president of the council to be executed. The family of the prince escaped destruction by a precipitate flight. Zeutra, his son, retired into Judea, and was raised to an office of trust and honour by his brethren in that country.†

Chosroes the great, who succeeded Cavades, treated the Jews with greater severity than his predecessor. They endeavoured to obtain the favour of this prince, by persuading him to

* Basnage, p. 182. † Ibid. p. 564.

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break off his negotiations for peace with the emperour Justinian, which were then in great forwardness. For this purpose they promised Chosroes, that, if he would consent to continue the war, they would furnish him with fifty thousand men, by whose assistance he might be enabled to conquer Jerusalem, one of the richest cities in the world. The king, duped by their flattering promises, broke off his treaty with the emperour, and prepared to carry the project into execution. He was, however, soon informed, that the persons who were employed in the treacherous design had been seized by order of government; and after making a full discovery of their plan and abettors, had been put to death. But this intelligence did not deter Chosroes from prosecuting the war, which was conducted with great energy, and many successful inroads were made into Syria and Palestine. The Jews, however, in those parts participated in the common calamities, and were treated with equal severity with the other inhabitants of the conquered countries. Their academies were shut; their love of learning became extinguished; the prince of the captivity was obliged to remove into Judea, and the eastern Jews were destitute of chiefs to preside over them.*

* Basnage, p. 565.

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A. D. 589. When Hormisdas the third ascended the throne, he restored their former privileges, which they continued to enjoy during the reign of this prince. The academy of Pundebita was opened under the direction of the celebrated rabbi Chanan Mehischa. A new order of doctors appeared, who were called Gaons, sublime or excellents, and destroyed the Sebureans, or Sceptics. These doctors were constituted chiefs of the academies, were consulted upon all difficult questions, and their decisions were regarded as oracles by their brethren, who considered them the ablest interpreters of the law.*

After Chosroes II. had murdered his father Hormisdas in order to obtain the throne, his son Varanes rebelled against him, and had the address to engage the Jews in his interest. They, however, paid dear for their presumption; and Varanes being reduced to subjection, they were regarded as a faithless and implacable people, that excited the subjects against their princes, and fomented sedition. Those of Antioch were the first victims of Chosroes' resentment; many of whom perished by the sword; others were put to death by the most cruel torments; and those, who survived, subjected to the most abject slavery.†

* Basnage, p. 565. Modern Universal Hist. Vol. XIII. p. 208.
† Basnage, p. 566. Mavor's Universal Hist. Vol. XIII. p. 18.

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Chosroes, however, was afterwards reconciled to the Jews, who appear to have rendered him many signal and important services. They acted in concert with this monarch during his invasion of Palestine, and even furnished him with an army of twenty thousand men. When, after the reduction of Galilee, the Persian monarch made himself master of Jerusalem,* they, with furious bigotry, pillaged and destroyed the christian churches; and the king having delivered the christian prisoners into their hands, they satiated their implacable hatred against them, by putting ninety thousand of this unhappy people to a cruel death.† A. D. 613.

While Chosroes was besieging Constantinople, and all the forces of Syria and Judea were employed in defence of that city, the Jews conspired with their brethren in Palestine to make an attempt to conquer Tyre, and destroy its inhabitants. But the Tyrians having obtained timely intelligence of their design were prepared for the attack, and repulsed them with great bravery. After this disappointment, they dispersed themselves through the country, and assaulted and burned many of the christian churches. They were, at length,

* Jerusalem was recovered from the Persians by the Greek emperour Heraclius; and soon after taken by the Arabians. See the following chapter.

† Basnage, p. 566.

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vanquished by the Tyrians, who sallied out of the city, and made a terrible slaughter.*

Whilst the eastern Jews, in the sixth century, sustained a series of persecutions in Persia, their brethren in the west were cruelly oppressed, and gradually stripped of their immunities and privileges. The emperour Justinian, who assumed the prerogative of deciding on all religious controversies, issued an edict which prohibited their celebrating the passover according to their own calculation, and obliged them to observe it at the same time with the christian church. Soon after he forbade the magistrates to admit them to give evidence against the Christians; and deprived them of the privilege of making wills, and bequeathing legacies. These decrees were followed by another, still more oppressive, which interdicted them from educating their children in their own faith. Justinian also, at the request of the council of Carthage, deprived those of Africa of the exercise of their religion, and commanded the prefect to convert their synagogues into churches.†

A. D. 550. The Jews were exasperated by these severe edicts, and the general discontent and indignation soon ripened into an open rebellion. One

* Basnage. Modern Univer. Hist.

† Basnage, p. 576. Modern Univer. Hist. Vol. XIII. p. 215.

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Julian, who pretended to be the Messiah, had the address to attract many of his brethren in Palestine to his standard. After assuming the title of conqueror, he armed his followers; led them against the Christians; and they, being wholly unprepared for an attack, were slaughtered in great numbers. At length, however, Justinian sent troops against the insurgents; and, though they fought with desperation, they were soon entirely routed. The false Messiah was taken, and immediately put to death; and thus the revolt was terminated.*

Twenty five years after, the Jews in Cesarea rebelled against the Roman government; and, notwithstanding the inveterate hatred which subsisted between them and the Samaritans, they united their forces against the Christians. The insurgents attacked and demolished many of the churches, and massacred large numbers of the people, particularly the governour in his own palace. Justinian, upon being apprized of the revolt, and the cruelties which were perpetrated, confiscated the property of the most affluent; and the others, who engaged in the rebellion, were beheaded or banished.† A. D. 555.

* Basnage, p. 576. Modern Univer. Hist. Vol. XIII. p. 215.

† Basnage, p. 577.

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The Jews joined the Goths* in Italy against Justinian and his general Belisarius. While this celebrated officer was engaged in the siege of Naples, they defended the city with the most obstinate resolution. When the citizens were about to capitulate, they encouraged and persuaded them to hold out to the last extremity. In consequence of their exertions the siege was protracted, which occasioned the destruction of many of the Roman soldiers. When the city was taken, though Belisarius endeavoured to inspire his troops with sentiments of clemency and pity, the Jews, without any distinction of age, sex, or rank, were cruelly put to death. Intimidated by this dreadful severity, they remained peaceable during the two subsequent reigns.

A. D. 602. At length, under the reign of Phocas, the Jews at Antioch, where they had become populous and affluent, raised an insurrection against the Christians, who defended themselves with great resolution; but not being sufficiently powerful to repel their enemies, they became the victims of their cruelty. Many were burnt in their houses; and bishop Anastasius, and several others, after having endured the great-

* The fidelity of the Jews to the Gothic kings cannot justly be alleged against them, since they were then their subjects.—*Basnage, p.* 579.

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est indignities, were put to death. The rebellion, however, after an arduous conflict, was suppressed by a powerful body of forces, which Phocas sent against them; and the barbarous conduct of the insurgents severely punished.*

The Jews, at this period, notwithstanding the edict of Adrian, had become numerous in Cyprus. About four years after the insurrection at Antioch, bishop Leontius, fearing that the island would suffer similar calamities, resolved to use every possible method to effect their conversion. His endeavours proved so successful, if we may depend upon his apology to be genuine, that the greater part of them, renounced Judaism, and were baptized.† Many of their brethren, in other parts, were about this time induced to profess the christian religion. A learned ecclesiastical historian, however, remarks, that "it must be acknowledged, that of these conversions the greater part were owing to the liberality of christian princes, rather than to the force of argument, or love of truth."‡ A. D. 606.

* Basnage, p. 578.

† Basnage, p. 579. ‡ Mosheim's Ecclesiast. Hist. Vol. II. p. 98.

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CHAP. IX.

Appearance of Mahomet. His behaviour to the Jews. They take arms against him, are reduced, and compelled to become tributary. Rapid conquests of the caliph Omar; he besieges and takes Jerusalem. The Jews rejoice at his success in Persia. They are favoured by the first caliphs. Those in Italy are protected by pope Gregory the great. They are severely treated by the emperour Heraclius, who instigates other monarchs to persecute them.

A. D. 609. MAHOMET, the famous Arabian impostor, appeared in the early part of the seventh century, and established a new religion, which, by force of arms, made a rapid progress in the world. Many of the Jews, after the destruction of their country, had fled to Arabia; and the industrious exiles, who aspired to liberty and power, obtained possession of several towns and fortresses, and had armies, and princes to command them. Their number and respectability induced Mahomet at first to treat them with great attention. He ordered his followers when they prayed to turn towards the temple of Jerusalem; and adopted many of their opinions and customs, in order to engage them in his interest.*

The Jews, dazzled by the splendour of his victories, began to regard him as the expected Messiah, and some persons of distinction among them embraced his religion. How-

* Basnage, p. 566. Gibbon, Vol. VI.

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ever, they were, soon after, much offended at his eating camels flesh, which is forbidden by the Mosaic law. But the fear of appearing inconstant, or the hope of deriving advantage from the impostor, induced them to aid him in his design. The Arabian writers assert, that this nation sent twelve of their doctors to assist him in compiling the Koran.* But they afterwards became his inveterate enemies; and their behaviour gave rise to the most implacable hatred on his part. His aversion to this unhappy people continued till the last moment of his life; and, in "the double character of an apostle and a conqueror, his persecution extended to both worlds."† In his Koran he reproaches them with betraying and murdering the prophets, and styles them "a people justly cursed of God for their violation of his sabbath and laws; for their treatment of Jesus Christ, whom he acknowledges to be a great prophet; and for having filled up the measure of their iniquity by rejecting his own mission."‡

The Jewish tribe at Kainoka dwelt at Medina under the protection of the city. Mahomet seized the occasion of an accidental tumult, and summoned them to embrace his religion,

* Basnage, p. 566. † Gibbon, Vol. VI. ‡ Sale's Koran, Vol. I. p. 35.

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or contend with him in battle. "Alas!" replied the trembling Jews, "we are ignorant of the use of arms; but we persevere in the faith and worship of our fathers; why wilt thou reduce us to the necessity of a just defence." But as war was inevitable, Cajah, one of the most distinguished persons of the Jewish nation, who had uniformly opposed all the measures of the impostor, appeared at the head of his countrymen.*

In the third year of the Hegira† Mahomet besieged the Jews in Hegiasa, and, having obliged them to surrender at discretion, drove them into exile. Their wealth was confiscated, and distributed among his followers. After several engagements, in which the impostor was victorious, Cajah attacked him near Kaibar; and though this place was the seat of the Jewish power in Arabia, this miserable people were defeated with great slaughter. Their leader, who with difficulty escaped, being resolved to try the event of another engagement, was again completely routed; and suffered death with that constancy which char-

* Basnage, p. 568.

† Hegira is a term signifying the epocha, used by the Arabians and Turks, who begin their computation from the day that Mahomet was compelled to make his escape from the city of Mecca, which took place, July 16, A. D. 622, under the reign of the emperour Heraclius.

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acterizes his nation. After the termination of the unequal conflict, the Jews were compelled to submit to the power of the conqueror, and became tributary. Some time after the death of the impostor, they were transplanted to Syria, he having left it as his dying injunction, that one and the true religion should alone be professed in his native land of Arabia.*

The caliphs, who succeeded Mahomet, united the temporal and spiritual power; and their valour, being animated by the violent spirit of fanaticism, was altogether irresistible. Omar, the second caliph, was one of the most rapid conquerors, who ever spread desolation over the face of the earth. During the ten years of his reign he subdued Arabia, Syria, Mesopotamia, Persia, and Egypt. With the Saracens under his command, he invested Jerusalem, and after an obstinate siege, which lasted four months, the Christians, having obtained an honourable capitulation, surrendered the city. The conqueror would not allow them to be deprived of their churches. But by his command, the ground where Solomon's temple stood was prepared for the foundation

* Gibbon, Vol. VI.

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of a mosque, which was the first Mahometan place of worship erected in Jerusalem.*

When Persia submitted to the victorious Saracens, the Jews, who hoped for a favourable change in their affairs, rejoiced in their success. Isdesgerdi III. the last Persian monarch, had, according to their annals, either begun, or carried on a bloody persecution against them; giving their synagogues to the Magi, and causing their academies to be shut. The rapid conquests of the enemies of their cruel oppressors, who were either Pagans or Christians, and the frequent destruction of the churches of the latter, highly gratified their inclinations. They are even accused of having ingratiated themselves with the Saracens, by instigating them against the Christians. Those enthusiastick conquerors for some time used their prosperity with moderation; and though the Jews often changed masters by the swift succession of monarchs, they

* Basnage, p. 572.

Jerusalem was transferred from the possession of the Greek Christians to the dominion of the Arabian Musselmans, and continued in subjection to the caliphs, about four hundred years. When Omar took the city the inhabitants were allowed the exercise of their religion; but they were prohibited from building any new churches, either in the metropolis, or the adjacent country; from riding upon saddles, or bearing any kind of arms. They were obliged to dress in a different manner from the Mahometans, and subjected to pay tribute to their conquerors.—*Ockley's Saracens Conquests, p. 258.*

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only participated in the common calamities which attend great revolutions in governments. They highly extol the humanity of the first caliphs, who restored them to the free exercise of their religion; allowed the princes of the captivity to enjoy great authority, and permitted their academies to be opened, and placed in a flourishing condition.*

A number of the Roman pontiffs have been equally indulgent to the Jewish nation with the first caliphs. In Italy, where this people were numerous in the seventh century, they were treated with moderation and kindness by pope Gregory the great. Their general conversion was the object of his ardent desires, and earnest endeavours. In order to effect this benevolent design, he wrote to his receiver in Sicily, to abate those who professed the christian religion a third part of the revenues they were indebted to him. He also warmly exhorted his clergy and flock to use them with candour and tenderness, alleging, that they were one day to be recalled, and become a large part of Christ's fold; and that the proper method to conduct them to the unity of the faith, was kind and friendly treatment. "Violence," said he, "will disgust those who might be allured by gentleness and charity." He strong- A. D. 606.

* Basnage, p. 573.

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ly expressed his abhorrence of the persecution they suffered in different countries, and condemned the zeal of some of the bishops against them. He even reprehended the conduct of a converted Jew, who, in order to ingratiate himself with the Christians, set up a cross, and image of the virgin in a synagogue. Gregory ordered the cross and image to be removed, alleging, that since the laws did not permit the Jews to build new synagogues, they ought to be allowed the free enjoyment of those they already possessed.* With the same liberal spirit he condemned the conduct of the bishop of Terracina, who had deprived them of a synagogue in his diocese, which was permitted by the laws; and had expelled them from another place, where they had retired in order to perform their devotional exercises.†

This pontiff, however, who was frequently consulted respecting the domestic affairs of the Jews, disapproved of their purchasing christian slaves, and revived the laws which had been enacted against this traffick. He also ordered, that all their Jewish domestics, who

* It appears that the former edicts of the emperour Theodosius were still in force against the Jews, notwithstanding the clemency of pope Gregory towards this people.—*Modern Univer. Hist. Vol. XIII. p. 220.*

† Basnage, p. 579.

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professed the christian religion, and received baptism, should obtain their liberty.*

The cruel treatment which the Jews soon after experienced from Heraclius, the Greek emperour, formed a striking contrast to the clemency of the Roman pontiff. This monarch hated the Hebrew race on account of their religion, and his animosity against them was increased by finding at Tiberias one of the nation so rich as to be able to supply his army and court with provisions. This man, elated with his affluence, molested the Christians with troublesome law suits, and malicious prosecutions. But, being sensible that he had exposed himself to the resentment of the emperour, he endeavoured to elude his vengeance by professing the christian religion. This expedient, however, did not lessen the monarch's aversion to the Jewish nation.†

Heraclius was still more exasperated against the Jews, when, upon his consulting the diviners concerning the fate of the empire, he receiv- for answer, that a circumcised nation would

* Basnage, p. 579. † Ibid, p. 580.

According to the account of Mosheim, "the emperour Heraclius, being incensed against this miserable people, by the insinuations of the christian doctors, persecuted them in a most cruel manner, and ordered multitudes of them to be inhumanly dragged into the christian churches, in order to be baptized, by violence and compulsion."—*Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, Vol. II. p.* 152.

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prove its ruin. Considering how powerful and numerous the Hebrews were in most parts of his dominions, and that they still cherished the hope of being restored to their native country, he believed them to be the people intended by the prediction. The great and frequent efforts they had made to recover their liberty, and their cruel and sanguinary proceedings against the Christians at different times, and in various places, confirmed him in this belief; and induced him to persecute them with the utmost severity. He banished them from Jerusalem, to which they had once more gained access;* and issued an edict, prohibiting them from approaching within three miles of the city. The emperour was not satisfied with persecuting and destroying this unhappy people in his own dominions; but instigated other monarchs to follow his example.† The calamities which they suffered in Spain, Gaul, and other kingdoms, will be related in the following chapter.

* Previous to the conquest of Jerusalem by the Saracens, which has been mentioned in the preceding part of this chapter.

† Basnage, p. 581.

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CHAP. X.

The Jews in Spain are cruelly persecuted by Sisebut, the Gothic king of that country. Decrees of the councils of Toledo. Frequent apostasy of the Jewish converts. The archbishop of Toledo writes in order to convert them. They form a conspiracy against the Spanish government. Severe laws are enacted against them. Of the Jews in Gaul. They are expelled by king Dagobert, and by Wamba, king of the Goths. They found an academy in Lunel.

THE Jews, who were transplanted to Spain by the policy of Adrian, had become numerous in that kingdom, and acquired wealth by their dexterity in trade. Their affluence excited the avarice of their masters; and, as they had lost the use of arms, they might be oppressed with impunity. The emperour Heraclius, who had been engaged in war with Sisebut, the Spanish monarch, made it one of the principal articles of the peace, that the king should compel them to receive baptism, or abandon the kingdom. The religious bigotry of Sisebut induced him readily to accede to this article; and without consulting any of his bishops, and even contrary to their remonstrances, he imprisoned the most distinguished personages among this unhappy people.*

After having remained some time in confinement, large numbers of Jews, in order to preserve their wealth and lives, consented to be

* Mariana's History of Spain.

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baptized. The estates of the more obstinate were confiscated, and their bodies tortured. Some found means to retire into Gaul, where similar miseries awaited them. They assert, however, that during the life of Sisebut, they were not even allowed the privilege of prefering their religion to their country, and endeavouring to escape by a voluntary exile from the evils they endured.*

A. D. 633. The conduct of the king was highly censured by Isidore, bishop of Seville, and condemned even by the catholic clergy in Spain. In the fourth council of Toledo,† in which Isidore presided, it was declared unchristian and unlawful to use compulsory measures in religion. The reasons assigned were, that God hardens, and has compassion on whom he pleases; and that none can be saved without their own free consent. This council, however, ordained, that those whom persecution had induced to receive baptism, should be compelled, for the honour of the church, to

* Basnage, p. 581. History of Spain.

† This council was assembled by Sisenand, who, having dethroned the son of Sisebut, endeavoured to reconcile the minds of the people to his government, by prevailing upon the clergy to give a religious sanction to his proceedings. The council conformed to his views, and instructed the Goths to unite under his government.—*Basnage, p.* 581.

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persevere in conforming to the external rites of the christian religion. This decree, which derogates from the liberal spirit exhibited in the former, was enacted, because the pretended converts relapsed into Judaism, whenever the immediate influence of terrour was withdrawn.*

Chintila, who succeeded Sisenand, treated the Jews with the greatest rigour; and appeared to be totally regardless of the sacred rights of conscience. The decree of this monarch, which commanded all his subjects to profess the christian faith, was the signal of persecution and exile; and an edict was passed for their total expulsion. It appears probable, that the usurious advantage, which they might derive from their wealth, augmented the publick hatred against them. Yet the Goths were unwilling to deprive themselves of the industrious slaves over whom they might exercise lucrative oppression; and the Jews continued in Spain under the weight of the civil and ecclesiastical laws.* A. D. 638.

In order to engage the Spanish clergy to forward his views, Chintila convened the fifth council of Toledo. This assembly passed several decrees in his favour, which the king caused to be confirmed by another council, convoked the same year, and at the same place.

* Basnage, p. 582. History of Spain.

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The divines, who composed this assembly, highly commended his zeal against the Jews; and blessed God for having given them such a wise and pious prince. They solemnly ratified the edict he had enacted for the banishment of this miserable people; and declared, that no prince for the future should ascend the Spanish throne till he had taken an oath to observe all the laws against them; and he who violated this sacred engagement was to be anathematized.*

These severe laws were punctually observed by the succeeding monarchs. The Visigoth kings enacted a law which completely authorized persecution; and alleged in their vindication, that "since the violent take the kingdom of heaven by force, men ought to be stimulated to obtain this blessing." By this law it was ordained, that every Jew, who refused to receive baptism, should suffer a severe corporal punishment, be exiled from the kingdom, and have all his goods confiscated.†

A. D. 633. Multitudes of this persecuted people, intimidated by the gloomy prospects before them, were induced to conform externally to the na-

* Basnage observes, that the different decrees enacted in this, and the preceding council, were owing to the death of Isidore of Seville. This benevolent prelate, who was a strong advocate for mild treatment, presided in the fourth council of Toledo, but died before the sixth.—*Basnage, p. 582.*

† Modern Universal History, Vol. XIII. History of Spain.

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tional faith. But as their conformity was only extorted by terrour, many were soon observed to apostatize. To remedy this evil, a new council was convened. The Jews, apprehending that the decrees of the assembly would be the prelude of a violent persecution against them, resolved to shelter themselves from the impending calamity. For this purpose, the most distinguished personages of their nation met, and wrote to the king in the name of their brethren in Spain, declaring that, though they had till then dissembled, they were now firmly resolved to become sincere converts, and wholly to conform to the laws of the gospel. They assured his majesty, that they would no longer observe their sabbath, circumcise their children, or form any connexions by marriage with those who were unbaptized; and promised to persecute any of their brethren, who should presume to violate these engagements. They even consented, provided their lives might be spared, to be doomed to perpetual slavery, and have all their effects confiscated.*

The ample promises contained in this letter, rendered their sincerity more suspected, and their conduct more strictly observed. It was accordingly discovered, that they still performed the Jewish rites, and even ventured to at-

* Basnage, p. 582. Modern Univer. Hist. Vol. XIII. p. 223.

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tack the christian religion. The king, finding the difficulty of effecting his purpose by coercive measures, ordered Julian, archbishop of Toledo, to write againt them; and this prelate, in 686, published a learned treatise, in which he proved from the prophetic writings, that *Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah.*

The Gothic kings and bishops at length discovered, that injuries would produce hatred, and that hatred would find an opportunity of revenge. The Jews exulted in the victories of the Mahometans, and commenced a dangerous and hostile correspondence with their brethren, who, under the administration of Chintila, had sheltered themselves from persecution in Africa. On receiving from them assurance of support, and with the secret hope of more effectual succour from the Saracens, they fixed a day to erect the standard of revolt.*

Before the appointed time arrived, their preparations had alarmed, and their intentions been betrayed to king Egica. This monarch complained of the conspiracy to the council of Toledo, and demanded the assistance and advice of the divines, who composed the assembly. Upon deliberation, they resolved, that all the circumcised should be declared perpet-

* Basnage, p. 583. History of Spain.

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ual slaves, that their estates should be confiscated, and their children taken from them, and educated in the christian faith.*

If from Spain we turn to a neighbouring country, we find the Jews still oppressed and persecuted. As soon as the Romans† were driven out of Gaul, and the Visigoths suppressed, several directions and decrees were made respecting them, and one in particular, A. D. 540. under Childebert, who forbade them to appear in the streets of Paris from Tuesday in the holy week to Easter Sunday. The council of Orleans about the same time enacted a similar decree, which renders it evident, that they were dispersed in several parts of France.‡ They were still more numerous in Languedoc. Ferreol, bishop of Uzes, was expelled from his diocese, for having treated them with too great familiarity and kindness. His motive was an ardent desire to effect their conversion. After he had continued an exile many years, and

* Basnage.

† Gaul was shared by the Visigoths and Burgundians, when Clovis, king of the Franks defeated Syagrius, a Roman usurper in that province, and established a new kingdom, to which he gave the name of France, or the land of freemen.—*Russell's Modern Europe.*

‡ The Jews, who settled in Gaul at an early period, made but little figure, and are only known by some edicts of Constantine, which mention them in Belgic Gaul. They began to be noticed in the histories of the country in the sixth century.

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the king had restored him to his bishopric, he fell into the other extreme, and banished the Jews.*

Avitus, bishop of Clermont, was distinguished by his zeal for the conversion of this people, and induced several persons among them to profess their belief in christianity. One of the new converts entered the city in his white garment, which being observed by a Jew, he threw a pot of oil of very offensive odour upon him. This outrage irritated the Christians to such a degree, that had not the bishop interposed, the offender would have been immediately put to death. The humanity of Avitus, however, only delayed the effects of their resentment till the succeeding festival. The people at that time demolished their synagogue, and the Jews were reduced to the alternative of professing christianity, or being exiled. The greater part of them chose to conform to the established worship, and were baptized.†

King Chilperic, who observed, that the Jews in Paris were numerous and affluent, resolved to use compulsory measures to induce them to abjure their religion. As he led an immoral life he hoped, by his zeal in attempting the conversion of an unbelieving people, to make an

* Basnage, p. 583. † Ibid, p. 584.

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atonement for his sins, and secure the favour of heaven. He therefore commanded, that all who refused to receive baptism, should be punished with the utmost rigour.*

They were treated with still greater severity by king Dagobert, who was notorious for the scandalous irregularity of his conduct. In order to avoid publick odium, to ingratiate himself with his clergy and people, and gratify the emperour Heraclius,† he banished from his kingdom upon pain of death, all the Jews, who refused to profess the christian religion. Many who had fled from Spain to escape persecution suffered a second exile. But still more of them preferred dissimulation, and consented to be baptized.‡ A. D. 629.

Wamba, king of the Goths in Languedoc, also exhibited a violent enmity against this people; and issued an edict which expelled them from his dominions. But he experienced the most determined opposition from the abbot Raymirus, and the court of Thoulouse, who united to protect this persecuted race, and op- 670.

* Basnage, p. 584.

† The emperour Heraclius, who had expelled the Jews from his dominions, and caused them to be banished from Spain, sent ambassadors to Dagobert to oblige him to imitate these examples.—*Basnage, p.* 584.

‡ Modern Univer. Hist. Vol. XIII. p. 226.

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posed the king's edict by force of arms. The king entrusted count Paul, his favourite, with the command of an army, which was destined to act against the rebels. But, instead of suppressing, he united with them, took Narbonne, and caused himself to be crowned king. At length, however, he was defeated, and condemned by Wamba; and his accomplices, especially the Jews, felt the effects of this monarch's resentment, and were expelled from the kingdom.*

Notwithstanding the sufferings of the Jewish nation in the seventh century, the academy which they had founded at Lunel, a city in Languedoc, began to flourish. In process of time it acquired great celebrity, and was the place where some of the most learned Jewish rabbis received their education.

* Basnage, p. 584.

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CHAP. XI.

Of the pretended conversion of the king of Chozar to Judaism. State of the eastern Jews in the eighth and ninth centuries. They are favoured by several of the caliphs, who were attached to literary men. Edict of Iman Jaaffar against them. Al-Wathek obliges them to pay heavy taxes. Motavel condemns them to wear a disgraceful badge of distinction. State of the Jews under the Grecian emperours. A false Messiah appears in Spain. Of their state in France. Punishment inflicted upon them by the emperour Charlemagne. They are highly favoured by Lewis, surnamed Debonair; but their condition is less agreeable under Charles the bald.

THE eighth century is celebrated by Jewish writers for the conversion of Chozar, a Pagan prince to their belief. According to their accounts he became dissatisfied with the religion of his people and progenitors; and conversed on this subject with philosophers, Christians, Mahometans, and Jews. At length, a learned rabbi convinced him, that Judaism was the only true religion, to which all others were but as the shadow to the substance, or the picture to the living original. Chozar therefore abjured his former tenets, and, after he was initiated in the belief and ceremonies of the Jews, employed himself in converting his subjects. He sent for the most learned men of this nation from all countries to instruct his people; and from that time the original Jews were held in high estimation. A tabernacle was erected, similar to that of Moses in the wilderness; to which they and the Chozrean converts repaired

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to the Jewish worship. The king became prosperous; triumphed over his enemies, and enlarged his dominions by new and considerable conquests. Such is the account of Jewish writers; but notwithstanding the degree of credit which they have endeavoured to attach to the conversion of Chozar, and of his subjects, the real existence of that prince, and of his kingdom, has always been much disputed.*

During the eighth, and part of the ninth century, the eastern Jews, under the dominion of the caliphs, sustained their share in the calamities which resulted from the civil wars among their conquerors. They, however, enjoyed entire liberty of conscience under the caliph Abdalmelech, and his two successors Alwalid and Solyman. Their academies flourished, and their doctors possessed all their antient privileges.

In the reign of Zeyd they suffered some oppressions, which were caused more from the rapaciousness of his ministers, than the cruelty of the monarch. But upon the dissolution of the government of the Ommiades under Mervan, their condition was ameliorated by the princes of the dynasty of the Abbassides.†

* Basnage, p. 587. Modern Universal History, Vol. XIII. p. 228.

† The fall of the Ommiades, and the establishment of the dynasty of the Abbassides took place about 750.—*Gibbon.*

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The caliph Almansor, who was a learned prince, patronized and encouraged literary men, and invited a large number of them to his court, without any regard to their particular religious opinions. Many Jews accepted the invitation of this monarch, and took advantage of his liberality to place their academies in a more flourishing condition than ever. They boast of the many famous men who appeared among their nation at this period. Among whom rabbi Acha was distinguished for his profound learning, and his voluminous treatise on the precepts of the law, under the title of Shealtoth, or Questions. About this time rabbi Annanus revived the sect of the Sadducees, which had been almost extinct after the destruction of Jerusalem; but under him the denomination acquired new vigour, and became formidable to that of the Pharisees.* A. D. 740.

The Jews of Arabia and Persia experienced the mortification of having an edict issued against them by Iman Jaaffar, surnamed the Just. Stimulated by zeal for his religion, he ordained, that those who embraced the Mahometan faith should be sole heirs of the property of the whole family. This decree, which 760.

† Some writers have styled Annanus the founder of the Caraites; but according to Basnage, and the authors of the Modern Universal History, this denomination were of much earlier date; and Annanus only revived the sect of the Sadducees.

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was punctually executed, induced many Jewish, and other children to apostatize, in order to obtain estates, to which they were unable to claim any just title.

Almansor was succeeded by Mohadi, who obliged the Jews either to embrace the Mahometan religion, or wear a disgraceful badge of distinction. In the reign of this prince, Hakem, an impostor, appeared, and by pretended miracles gained many disciples. This man, who is said to have been of Jewish origin, asserted, that the divinity, which in former times appeared in a human shape, now made his abode in him, and that he was the visible image of the most high God. Mohadi sent forces against the impostor, who besieged him in one of his fortresses. Upon which he first poisoned his followers, and then destroyed himself.*

A. D. 786. Aaron, the successor of Mohadi, was distinguished for his love of literature, and encouraged and patronized learned men of all religions, and of every profession. In particular he highly favoured the Jews, who were dispersed in his dominions, and chose one of their nation to send on an embassy to Charlemagne, the emperour of the west. He succeeded in his commission, and enjoyed a distinguished reputation at the court of Aaron.

* Basnage, p. 591. Gibbon, Vol. VII. p. 189.

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This caliph placed the academies of the eastern Jews in a flourishing condition; and they enjoyed profound tranquillity during his reign.*

Mamoun, the brother of Aaron, was also attached to literature, and caused the most valuable Jewish works to be translated into Arabic. And though this instance of his liberality exasperated his subjects, he continued to distinguish learned men of all nations and religions. Mashalla, a celebrated Jewish astronomer, was so highly esteemed at his court, that he was styled the Phœnix of the age. During the reign of Mamoun, the famous impostor Moses appeared, who pretended that he was the great lawgiver of the Jews, whom God had recently raised from the dead.† A. D. 831.

Al-Wathek, instead of imitating the conduct of the most enlightened caliphs who preceded him, became an implacable enemy to the Jews. He hated this people, because they refused to receive the Koran as an authentick revelation; and the fraudulent practices of which they had been guilty in the management of the finances, during the reign of his predecessor, increased his enmity against them. During his reign they were loaded with heavy 841.

* Bamage, p. 592. † Ibid, p. 594.

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taxes, and obliged to pay large sums into the treasury.*

A. D. 849. Motarakel, the successor of Al-Wathek, treated the Jews with still greater severity. He compelled them to wear a cord or sash round their waists, as an invidious mark of distinction; and excluded them from all offices in the Divan, which it appears they had till then enjoyed. He forbade their riding on horses, and only permitted them to use asses or mules with iron stirrups.

The edicts of this monarch not only extended through his empire, but spread into the neighbouring kingdoms; and these marks of infamy, in a greater or less degree, have subsisted ever since in those countries which are subjected to the Turks; and also in other parts of Europe under christian kings. Many of Motarakel's successors treated this degraded people with equal contempt. In the reign of Mahomed, the last of the princes who succeeded him, Achmet, the governour of Egypt, revolted, and formed a new dynasty.†

If we turn from the mahometan, to the christian monarchs, we find the Jews exposed to equal, if not greater vexations and persecu-

* Basnage, p. 594.

† Egypt was dismembered from the caliphate about the end of the ninth century.

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tions. The empire in the west, in the eighth century, was greatly agitated by the civil dissensions between the Iconoclasts and the worshippers of images; and the Jews were unjustly accused of fomenting these dissensions. Leo Isauricus, the Grecian emperour, commenced his reign with the persecution of this people; and commanded them to abjure their tenets, and embrace christianity under the severest penalties. They saved their lives by dissimulation, and consented to be baptized, and receive the communion; but at the same time expressed their internal aversion to the religion they had recently professed, by washing themselves in common water, and eating common bread immediately after receiving the sacraments. The patrons of images, notwithstanding the strenuous exertions of the emperour, at length prevailed. The Jews, who had pretended obedience to the mandates of Leo, being suspected of insincerity, were obliged to subscribe a new formulary, in which they acknowledged themselves worshippers of the cross, and holy images; and prayed to God that he would inflict upon them the leprosy of Gehazi, and the fear of Cain, if they did not willingly conform to the established religion.*

*Fleury's Ecclesiastical History, Vol. V. p. 43. Basnage, p. 569.

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Nicephorus, who succeeded Leo about the commencement of the ninth century, protected the Jews, and permitted them to live quietly under his government. They were still more favoured by his successor Michael, who tolerated all religions; is said to have imbibed something from each denomination; and entertained a peculiar regard for the Jews.*

But little is known respecting the situation of this people in Italy and Spain during the eighth and ninth centuries. About the year 724, those who resided in Spain involved themselves in a new calamity by listening to the delusive promises of one of their countrymen, named Serenus. This man, taking advantage of the dissensions between France and Spain, proclaimed himself the Messiah, and induced multitudes to follow his standard towards Palestine, where he engaged to establish his empire. The wealth which this infatuated people left behind them was seized by the government. Those, who did not perish by the way, returned to Spain to lament their blind credulity, and the losses they had sustained.†

A. D. 768. Languedoc, being at this time in the possession of the Visigoths, (as well as part of

* Modern Universal History, Vol. XIII. p. 239.

† Basnage, p. 597.

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Spain,*) was infested with frequent incursions of the Arabs. It is said, they were in alliance with, and even invited by the Jews, who engaged to assist them in destroying the Christians. They are also accused of requesting the aid of the Saracens to emancipate themselves from the tyranny and oppression of the bishop of Toulouse. These mahometan invaders, after traversing Narbonne, penetrated as far as Lyons, and laid waste the country with fire and sword. Charlemagne, having afterwards completely defeated the Saracens and retaken Toulouse, resolved to destroy the treacherous Jews, who had encouraged the invasion, and occasioned so much bloodshed. He was, however, prevailed upon to commute their punishment, and only the principal and most guilty suffered death. The others, who inhabited the city, were condemned to receive a box on the ear thrice a year at the gates of one of the churches, which should be named by the bishop; and to pay a perpetual fine of thirteen pounds of wax.†

* The Saracens, or Moors, had invaded Spain, and reduced a large part of that kingdom.

† This event, though related by many historians, is disputed by Basnage, who admits only the truth of two facts, viz. that Toulouse was besieged by the Saracens, and that the Jews in the city were

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Charlemagne, however, in some instances, treated the Jews with gentleness and moderation. They boasted of having the liberty of purchasing the sacred utensils and rich furniture of the churches, which the bishops and abbots, induced by luxury and avarice, had exposed to sale. And though this monarch enacted a severe law, prohibiting the clergy from carrying on this scandalous traffick, he did not exact any restitution from those of Hebrew origin, or lay any restrictions upon their commerce.*

They were highly favoured by Lewis, surnamed Debonair, whose chief physician, named Sedecias, was one of the Jewish nation. This man had acquired such an ascendancy over the monarch, that the courtiers endeavoured to conciliate his, and his countrymens' friendship with the richest presents. They had an easy access to the person of their sovereign, who allowed them the liberty of erecting new synagogues, and granted them other extensive privileges. Such powerful protection rendered them haughty and insolent, and excited the jealousy of the Christians.

ill used in the city, and buffeted in the person of their syndick. "This, says he, was done out of hatred to the Jews, without their being guilty of the imputed crime of betraying the city; and the story of their treachery was invented, in order to authorize the punishment and the infamy."—*Basnage, p. 598.*

* Basnage, p. 598.

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Agobard, bishop of Lyons, not only prohibited them from purchasing christian slaves, but forbade them to observe the sabbath, and carry on any commerce with the Christians during lent. They complained of these edicts to the king, who sent three commissaries to Lyons to make inquiries into the bishop's conduct; and, upon their report, the Jews were immediately restored to their antient privileges. Agobard, being mortified and disappointed, formed new accusations against them; but they were rejected at court, as false and groundless.*

After the bishop found all his attempts frustrated, he resolved to take a journey to court, to solicit Lewis more effectually against the Jews. But the king, surrounded by courtiers who hated the prelate, and were attached to this people, absolutely resisted all his solicitations, and only granted him an audience when he was about to depart. The protection the outcasts of Israel found at the court of Lewis against one of the most learned bishops of the age, rendered them so popular, that it was said openly at court, that the descendants of Abraham were entitled to respect. Even some Christians observed Saturday for the sabbath, and preferred attending the sermons of the rab-

* Basnage, p. 599. Modern Universal Hist. Vol. XIII. p. 248.

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bis to those of the curates and monks, who at this time were extremely ignorant. It is even said, that a deacon named Paudo quitted his office in the church, and went over to the synagogue.*

The Jews, under Charles the bald, were less flourishing and popular, than they had been during the reign of his predecessor. One of the French bishops, named Remisius, ordered the clergy in his diocese to preach every Saturday in the synagogues. This induced a number of Jewish parents to send their children to other parts of the kingdom in order to prevent their conversion. Remisius complained of their conduct to the king, and persuaded him to command the bishop of Arles, and other prelates, to follow his example. The consequence was, that many of the Jewish children were voluntarily baptized. Soon after Charles was poisoned by Sedecias, the Jewish physician, who was so famous in the preceeding reign; and it was supposed he was instigated to commit this crime by his countrymen, who hated the king, because he favoured these conversions. It was, however, discovered, that many of the nobility corrupted Sedecias, and engaged him to destroy the life of his sovereign.†

* Basnage, p. 599. † Ibid. Modern Univer. Hist. Vol. XIII. p. 243.

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The Jews were also accused of favouring the incursions of the Normans, which took place during the reign of Charles; and of treacherously betraying Bourdeaux and other cities into the hands of these invaders. They were still exposed to the ignominious sentence of being buffeted three times every year at the church door. But this indignity, which originated from a decree of Charlemagne, was not executed on all the Jews, but confined to the syndick, or head magistrate, who received this punishment in the name of the rest. In remote cities they were also liable to many insults from the populace. At Beziers, in Languedoc, it was the custom to throw stones upon them from Palm Sunday to the Tuesday on Easter week. This indignity, however, was at length redeemed by a tribute which they paid to the bishop in this place.*

* Basnage, p. 692. Gregoire, p. 224.

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CHAP. XII.

Flourishing state of learning among the eastern Jews at the commencement of the tenth century. Their tranquillity is interrupted by internal divisions. Of their learned rabbis. The Jews in Egypt are persecuted by the caliph Hakem, who introduces a new religion. They are expelled from the east. Some of the most learned among them pass into Spain, and cultivate literature under the Saracens. The Talmud is translated into the Arabic language. They attempt to convert the Mahometans; and are persecuted by the king of Grenada. King Ferdinand I. resolves to destroy them; but is prevented by the pope and bishops. The revolution caused by the Moors in Africa extricates them from persecution. They are favoured by Alphonso, and his grandson Peter. The Crusaders massacre the Jews. Disputes arise among them respecting the study of the sciences. Of the learned rabbis in Spain and France.

A. D. 927. WHILE Christendom was involved in darkness and ignorance, the Saracens became the patrons of philosophy in the east. The Jews, under their dominion, imitated their example, and applied to learning with assiduity and success.* New academies were erected in consequence of the rapid increase of professors and pupils; and those which had subsisted for ages were placed in a flourishing condition, under able preceptors. The Jews boast, that the famous men who appeared among them at

* In the ninth century the Jews began to make themselves acquainted with the sciences of the Arabs. In particular they excelled in the study of medicine. From the beginning of the ninth to the end of the thirteenth century eminent schools of philosophy flourished in the Saracen empire.—*Enfield's Philosphy, Vol. II. p.* 234.

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this time, were superiour to those of any preceding age, since their dispersion.*

Their tranquillity was, however, soon interrupted by internal divisions. David, prince of the captivity, an haughty and ambitious man, had, according to the Jewish accounts, found means to deliver his nation from the tribute, which till then they were compelled to pay to the caliphs. After having thus augmented his authority, he reigned as absolutely as an eastern monarch. In consequence of his arrogant behaviour, frequent altercations took place between him and the heads of the academies,† which produced fatal divisions, and involved the Jews in fresh difficulties.

The nation at this time were so numerous and powerful, that those in the city of Pheruty Shiboour are said to have amounted to nine hundred thousand. A new academy was founded in this city, at the head of which was the famous rabbi Sherira, under whom it flourished about thirty years. He was a man of A. D. 1037.

* Basnage, p. 601.

† The power of the heads of the academies was almost equal to that of the princes. For the latter could not enact any laws except they were sanctioned by the former. These chiefs have had frequent insurrections against each other. The princes of the captivity and heads of the academies were both elected by a majority of votes; and sometimes both these dignities were vested in the same person.—*Basnage, p. 602.*

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great learning, but a violent enemy to the Christians, particularly to the monks; and on that account more highly respected by his brethren. When arrived at an advanced age, he was succeeded by his son Hay,* who obtained such a distinguished reputation, that the Jews resorted from all parts to attend his instructions; and styled him, "the most excellent of all the excellent. He was placed at the head of two academies, and elected prince of the captivity. He died in 1037, aged sixty nine years.†

The Jews, in the reign of the caliph Hakem, suffered persecution for a short time in Egypt. The object of this monarch was to abolish Islamism, and establish a new religion, of which he should be the head.‡ The large number of Pagans, who acceded to his novel dogmas and pretentions, flattered his vanity, and induced him to persecute the Christians and Jews, who opposed and contemned his doc-

* The Jews pretend that he was lineally descended from king David, hence he bore the lion on his arms, as did all the kings of Judah, agreeably to Jacob's prophecy concerning that tribe. But he acquired still greater celebrity by various writings, particularly the famous cabbalistical work, styled "the voice of God in power." *Modern Univer. Hist. Vol. XIII. p. 247.*

† Basnage, p. 602.

‡ He blended the religion of the Druses, an ancient sect little known, with other tenets, which he pretended to receive from the Deity.—*Basnage, p. 605.*

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trines. He obliged the latter to wear a disgraceful mark of distinction; commanded their synagogues to be shut; and compelled them to embrace his tenets. But he soon changed his opinions, and permitted them to return to their former religion.*

A. D. 1039. The caliphs of the house of the Abbassides, who had always favoured the Jews, having lost their authority, the sultan Gela Doullat, who reigned by the name of Cajem, resolved to extirpate this unhappy people. For this purpose he shut up their academies; banished their professors; and killed the prince of the captivity, with his family. This persecution dispersed some of the nation into the desarts of Arabia, while others sought an asylum in the west. From the period in which the Jews were expelled from the east, most authors date the total extinction of the princes of the captivity; but, if we may believe the Jewish travellers, Benjamin de Tudela and rabbi Petachiah, who visited their brethren in the twelfth century, they still found one of these chiefs among the Israelites in Persia, who boasted that he was lineally descended from the prophet Samuel. If this account is true, it proves that these princes were not all of the

* Basnage, p. 605.

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lineage of David, as the Jews pretend. It is evident, however, that they were seldom seen after the eleventh century; and preserved only an empty name without authority.*

When the Jews were expelled from the east, multitudes of the nation passed into Africa, and from thence joined their brethren in Spain, who were favoured by the caliphs. They had assisted the Saracens in the conquest of this kingdom; and gratitude, as well as policy, induced the victors to reward those to whose open or secret aid they were so much indebted. An intimate connexion, therefore, took place between the disciples of Moses and those of Mahomet, which was cemented by their reciprocal hatred of the Christians; and subsisted till their common expulsion.†

Some of the most learned men among the Jews, after their banishment from the east, found an asylum in Spain, and were patronized by the Saracen monarchs. This period, therefore, was one of the most brilliant epochas of Jewish literature from the time of the destruction of Jerusalem. Even in the darkest ages of their history they cultivated their language with assiduity, and were never destitute of grammarians, or subtle interpreters of the scripture. But, generally speaking, it was only

* Basnage, p. 605. † History of Spain.

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during their union with the Saracens in Spain,* or in the flourishing ages of the caliphs of Bagdat, that they ventured into general literature, and used in their writings a foreign, and consequently (in their view) a profane language.†

While the attention of the Christians and Mahometans in Spain was occupied by their mutual hostilities, the Jews enjoyed an interval of tranquillity. Their academies were in a flourishing state under the Saracen monarchs; and they became numerous and affluent. During this prosperous era many learned doctors appeared among them, whose erudition has been celebrated by Jewish writers. The Talmud, however, was so little known in Spain, that they were obliged to send deputies to the Babylonian academies, to decide the disputes which arose among them. Even the prayers which they offered up on the grand expiation day, and other national fasts, were composed by one of the Babylonish rabbis. Hasheym II. the Saracen monarch of Cordova, who was a friend and patron to the Israelites, commanded this celebrated work to be translated into the Arabic language, in order either to gratify his curiosity, or prevent their frequent excursions

* The Saracens subdued Spain in the eighth century.

† Butler's Horæ Biblicæ.

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to Bagdat, or Jerusalem, from which it is said he apprehended fatal consequences.*

The wars in Spain, which raged with violence during the eleventh century,† and the revolutions to which they gave rise, were in their commencement beneficial to the Jews. Rabbi Samuel Levi, being secretary and prime minister to the king of Grenada, was by him appointed chief of their nation, and exerted himself to the utmost to promote their interest and honour. For this purpose he sent for some of the most learned Jewish rabbis from Babylon and Egypt, to whom he was a liberal benefactor. His countrymen had the satisfaction of seeing his son succeed him in all his
A. D. 1055. dignities. Their joy, however, was damped by his arrogant behaviour, which was very different from that of his father, who in the zenith of his prosperity was distinguished for humility and moderation.‡

The interval of tranquillity which the Jews enjoyed, was, about the middle of the eleventh century, disturbed by an unfortunate event. Joseph Hallevi, a learned and zealous rabbi,

* Basnage, p. 606.

† About the beginning of the eleventh century, Toledo, Valentia, Seville, and almost all the great cities in Spain, had their independent kingdoms.—*Russell's Modern Europe, Vol. I. p.* 180.

‡ Basnage, p. 607.

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assisted by the Arabic version of the Talmud, endeavoured to convert the Mahometans to the Jewish faith. The king of Grenada, highly exasperated at this attempt against the established religion, caused the principal offender to be apprehended and executed. A violent persecution of his nation immediately followed, and one hundred thousand families experienced its destructive effects. The severity of this monarch was more sensibly felt after a series of prosperity, which had rendered them affluent and powerful. They were apprehensive that the other sovereigns would follow his example. But the persecution was quickly suppressed, and did not extend beyond the kingdom of Grenada.*

The Jews were exposed to suffer still more severe and cruel treatment under king Ferdinand. This monarch, having declared war against the Saracens, resolved to consecrate his enterprize by previously extirpating all the Israelites in his kingdom. But the Spanish prelates openly condemned and opposed this measure; and pope Alexander II. wrote a letter to them, in which he highly commended their opposition to Ferdinand's bloody design; severely reproved this monarch for his furious

* Basnage, p. 607.

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and unchristian zeal; and reminded him of the example of pope Gregory the great, who had strenuously opposed similar persecution, and the demolishing of the synagogues. The united remonstrances of the pope and bishops delivered the Jews from the impending evil.*

A. D. 1080. The revolution, caused by the Moors in Africa, more effectually extricated them at this period from persecution. Alphonso, the successor of Ferdinand, being extremely distressed by the increasing power of the Saracens, found himself obliged to befriend and caress the Jews in order to obtain from them personal and pecuniary assistance. Accordingly he promoted them to great and lucrative offices; and even allowed them to be judges over the Christians. Pope Gregory highly disapproved of this last instance of the king's indulgence; and upbraided him with having "exalted the synagogue of Satan above the church of Christ." The remonstrances of the Roman pontiff could not induce the monarch to diminish those privileges, which he had granted merely from interested motives.†

1096. Peter I. the grandson of Alphonso, was equally regardless of the remonstrances of Nicolas de Valentia, who endeavoured to prejudice the king against the Jews, by painting

* Basnage, p. 607. † Ibid.

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in strong colours their hatred to the Christians; and assuring him, that they were his most dangerous and inveterate enemies. But this monarch was averse to persecution; and maintained that violence would have no lasting, or beneficial effect. The moderation of Peter could not, however, preserve this unhappy people in several other parts of Spain from the fury of the Crusaders,* who massa-

* The crusades, or expeditions to recover the holy land from the hands of the Mahometans, commenced about the year 1095. The foundation of these expeditions was a superstitious veneration for those places where our Saviour performed his miracles, and finished the work of redemption. Peter the hermit, a native of Amiens in Picardy, had made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and being deeply affected with the dangers to which the pilgrims were exposed, as well as the oppressions which the eastern Christians endured, formed the bold design of leading into Asia, from the furthest extremities of the west, armies sufficient to subdue that warlike nation, which then possessed the holy land. This fanatical monk ran from province to province, with a crucifix, exciting princes and people to the holy war; and wherever he came kindled the same enthusiastick ardour with which he himself was animated. People of all ranks caught the contagion; not only the gallant nobles of the age with their martial followers, but men in the more humble and pacifick stations in life; ecclesiasticks of every order, and even women and children engaged with emulation in an undertaking which was deemed sacred and meritorious. If we may believe the concurring testimony of cotemporary authors, six millions of persons assumed the cross, which was the badge that distinguished such as devoted themselves to this holy warfare. Nor did the fumes of this enthusiastick zeal evaporate at once; the phrenzy was as lasting as it was extravagant. During two centuries Europe seems to have had no object but to recover, or keep possession of the holy land; and during this period vast armies continued to march to Palestine.—*Robertson's History of Charles V. Vol. I. p. 22.*

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cred vast numbers of them. Under the idea of procuring a blessing on their expedition, they destroyed the descendants of those, who crucified our Saviour.*

Notwithstanding all the persecutions the Jews suffered in Spain during the eleventh century, many rabbis appeared, who were distinguished for ability and learning. Samuel Cophni, a native of Cordova, published a commentary on the Pentateuch, the manuscript of which is still extant in the Vatican library. Soon after him flourished the five Isaacs at nearly the same period; one of whom, called Isaac Alphesi, came from Africa to Spain. He was esteemed the most learned man of his age; and was chosen chief of the captivity in this kingdom. The second of the Isaacs was the son of Baruch, who derived his origin from the ancient Baruch, and pretended, that his family came to Spain as early as the reign of Titus, and had subsisted there till this time. He understood Latin, Greek, and Arabic; and was so profoundly versed in mathematicks, that the king of Grenada, who was a passionate admirer of this science, sent for him to court in order to receive his instructions. This monarch treated him with such flattering distinction, that he continued to reside at his court

* Basnage, p. 608.

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till his death, which took place 1007. The other three Isaacs were also men of distinguished ability and learning.*

The number of famous rabbis, who appeared in Spain during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, gave rise to disputes respecting the utility of studying the sciences. Those who had acquired a taste for literature ardently wished to make farther improvements. According to Enfield,† "the attention, which was paid to the writings of Aristotle,‡ both by Arabians and Christians, excited the emulation of the Jews, who addicted themselves to the study of the Peripatetic philosophy. This innovation, so inconsistent with the reverence which they professed to entertain for the law and traditions of their fathers, was exceedingly displeasing to the zealous advocates for Talmudic learning, who easily perceived, that as the one gained ground, the other would decline." The ancient curse denounced upon the Jew who should instruct his son in Gre-

* Basnage, p. 609. Modern Univer. Hist. Vol. XIII. p. 256.

† Enfield's Philosophy, Vol. II. p. 204.

‡ To facilitate the study of Aristotle among the Jews, his writings were translated from the Arabic to the Hebrew tongue. Several other ancient works, particularly the Elements of Euclid, and the medical writings of the Greeks, towards the close of the thirteenth century, appeared in a Hebrew dress.

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cian learning was revived. But rabbi Solomon-Ben-Abraham, who taught at Barcelona, mitigated the severity of this decree, which he had not sufficient courage to abolish; and pronounced an anathema and sentence of excommunication against all, who began to study Greek before they were twenty years old. Rabbi Mar, however, restored the Jewish students to the entire liberty of learning the languages, as well as the arts and sciences.*

In France, during the tenth and eleventh centuries, only a few rabbis appeared, who were distinguished for ability and learning. The most celebrated among them was rabbi Gersion, who flourished in the eleventh century. Some suppose he was a native of Germany; however, he published his book of constitutions in this kingdom. Though a long time elapsed before this work met with the approbation of the other Jewish doctors; yet it was received as a code of excellent laws about the year 1204, and its author dignified with the title of the "Light of the French Captivity."†

Jacob, the son of Jekar, one of Gersion's pupils, was a great musician and casuist; and the succeeding Jewish doctors followed his decisions with implicit reverence. Rabbi Judah, another of his disciples, also held a dis-

* Basnage, p. 610. † Ibid.

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tinguished rank among the learned men of his nation. He composed a treatise on the rights of women; and a work on the Jewish calculations of time. According to his account their first epocha was from their departure from Egypt; they began another date from the period in which they were first governed by kings; and a third from the time Alexander the great first entered Jerusalem, which was observed till the tenth century, during which period rabbi Sherira flourished, and obliged his nation to date from the creation of the world. He also published a number of sermons. Another of Gersion's pupils, rabbi Moses Hardarshian, or the preacher, acquired a distinguished reputation. He, and rabbi Judah, introduced the custom of preaching in the synagogues, which had been much neglected. The former was the author of a commentary on Genesis, which has often been quoted by Christians against the Jews.*

Joseph-Ben-Gorian, known to his nation by the name of Josippon, is supposed by Basnage and others, to have been a French rabbi of the eleventh century. He endeavoured in his History of the Jews, written in Hebrew, to pass for the famous historian Josephus, and

* Basnage, p. 609.

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has succeeded with his nation.* But the most learned christian writers reject this performance as spurious, on account of the many interpolations, modern names, and contradictions, which are found in this history.

CHAP. XIII.

Of the Jews in Hungary during the eleventh century. Persecution of this people in Germany and Bohemia. The Crusaders massacre vast multitudes of them in their march through the cities of Germany to the holy land. They arrive at Jerusalem, besiege and take the city, and put all the Jews to death. Of the second crusade. The Jews are massacred in most parts of Europe.

A. D. 1092. DURING the latter part of the eleventh century, St. Ladislaus, king of Hungary, convened a synod, which prohibited the Jews from marrying christian women, or purchasing slaves who had embraced this religion. Coloman, his son and successor, also forbade their making use of christian slaves; but he permitted them to buy and cultivate lands within the jurisdiction of a bishop. These laws clearly demonstrate, that they were numerous and powerful in this kingdom.†

* Priestley's Letters to the Jews, p. 4. David Levi asserts, that the work called Josephoen Ben Gorian was written by Josephus to the Jews in Hebrew; and that the other history, to which his name is prefixed, was written to the Romans in Greek.—*Levi's Letters to Priestley, p.* 67.

† Basnage, p. 616.

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The number and power of the Jews had also become great in Germany; and they had erected superb synagogues in most of the principal cities, particularly at Treves, Cologn, Metz and Francfort. They had passed from Franconia into Bohemia; and having in the eleventh century assisted the Christians against the irruptions of the barbarians, were allowed the privilege of a synagogue. They suffered indeed severe persecutions in several parts of these kingdoms; and the fanaticism of the populace frequently exposed them to destruction. A priest named Gotescal, at the head of fifteen thousand banditti, declared war against them; and being supported and encouraged by several monarchs, passed into Hungary, and committed the most horrid outrages upon this unhappy people. But at length it being discovered, that he pillaged the Christians as well as the Jews, he was surprised and slain with the greatest part of his army.

Not long after, the landgrave of Lininghen declared himself the persecutor of the Jews, and committed several acts of violence against them. But on his attempting to penetrate into Hungary, he was surprised and defeated. The emperour Henry IV. exerted himself in defence of

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this oppressed people; and ordered them to be reinstated in their abodes and property. This occasioned fresh complaints against them; and they were accused of having exaggerated their losses, in order to enrich themselves by a more plentiful restitution.*

A. D. 1096. Soon after, the Crusaders involved them in the most terrible calamities they had ever experienced since the reign of Adrian. These expeditions awakened all the rage of their enemies against them; and "their population seemed to have increased only to furnish new victims." The champions of the cross, in their march through Germany to the holy land, massacred all who refused to profess the christian religion. Fifteen hundred were burnt at Strasburgh, thirteen hundred at Mayence; and the flames being communicated to the city, it was in great danger of being reduced to ashes.† This massacre was continued from the month of April till July. According to the Jewish‡ historians, five thousand of their

* Basnage, p. 616.

† Gregoire on the Reformation of the Jews, p. 5.

‡ A Modern Jewish author has thus described the miseries his nation endured from the fury of the Crusaders: "When from his solitary retreat an enthusiastick hermit preached the crusades to the nations of Europe, and a part of its inhabitants left their country to moisten with their blood the plains of Palestine, the knell of promiscuous massacre tolled before the alarm-bell of war. Millions of Jews were then murdered to glut the pious rage of the Cruss-

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nation were either slaughtered or drowned; and the number of those, who preserved their lives by dissimulation, was much more considerable. They were so far from exaggerating, that the christian writers make the amount of those who were destroyed vastly greater. The Batavian annalists assert, that upwards of twelve thousand were slain in their country; and all agree, that the number of those who perished in other parts of Germany* was almost incredible. Many, in the phrenzy of despair, put a period to their own lives. Even some women at Treves, seeing the Crusaders approaching, killed their children, telling them, "that it was much better to send them into Abraham's bosom, than to abandon them to the Christians." Some of the men barricaded their houses, and precipitating

ders. It was by tearing the entrails of their brethren that these warriors sought to deserve the protection of Heaven. Skulls of men and bleeding hearts were offered as holocausts on the altars of that God who has no pleasure even in the blood of the innocent lamb; and ministers of peace were thrown into a holy enthusiasm by these bloody sacrifices. It is thus that Basil, Treves, Coblentz, and Cologn, became human shambles."—*Appeal to the Justice of Kings and Nations, by M. Michæl Berr.*

* Metz is, perhaps, the only city in Germany where the Crusaders did not embrue their hands in the blood of the Jews. Lewis the young, on his departure for Palestine, assembled his army in this place; and yet it is not said, that the Jews received any insult. The silence of history in this respect amounts to a positive proof, if we consider, that Metz then had historians.—*Gregoire*, p. 212.

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themselves, their families, and wealth into the rivers, or the flames, disappointed the malice, or at least the avarice of their implacable enemies. Others, who were less obstinate, fled for refuge to the palace of Egibert the bishop. This prelate preached to them a sermon, by which they pretended to be converted. But, as soon as the influence of terrour was withdrawn, all except one resumed their former religion.

During this period of darkness and fanaticism, while the publick outcry denounced vengeance against an unbelieving race, it must gratify every benevolent heart to catch a feeble voice in history whispering consolation to the sufferers in Israel. Our pleasure is increased when we discover this humanity among the clergy, who have been often accused of instigating the persecutions against them. At Mayence and Spires we find prelates sheltering them from the fury of the Crusaders, receiving the fugitives to their houses, and even causing some of their persecutors to be executed. The bishop of Spires, in particular, has been celebrated for his active interference in their behalf.*

A. D. 1099. After murdering the Jews in the cities through which they passed, the champions of

* Gregoire on the Reformation of the Jews, p. 5, 6.

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the cross advanced in order to invest Jerusalem, which they regarded as the consummation of all their labours. They took the city* by assault, after a siege of five weeks; and, impelled by a mixture of military and religious rage, destroyed the inhabitants without distinction of sex or age. Their fury rose to such an height, that all the Jews, being the successors of those who had crucified our Saviour, were most inhumanly put to death.†

A. D. 1147.

The persecutions which the Jews suffered from the Crusaders were not terminated after the conquest of Jerusalem. Other expeditions were undertaken in order to secure to the Christians the possession of the holy land, to enlarge their conquests, and to recover the city after it was retaken by the Mahometans.‡ The second crusade was promoted by the exhortations of St. Bernard, and supported by

* This great event took place on the fifth of July, in the last year of the eleventh century. The christian princes and nobles, after choosing Godfrey of Bouillon king of Jerusalem, began to settle themselves in their newly conquered countries. Some of them, however, returned to Europe, in order to enjoy at home the glory which they had acquired by this popular enterprize.—*Hume's History of England, Vol. I. p.* 232.

† Guthrie's History of the World, Vol. VII. p. 66. Gibbon, Vol. XI. p. 85.

‡ From the time that Jerusalem was taken by the western Christians, that is from July 5th. 1099 to the end of year 1162, the city was governed by five Latin kings, and the church by eight patriarchs. —*Maritie's Travels.*

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the emperour Conrad, and the French king Lewis VII. The hermit Rodolphus, who was commissioned to proclaim the holy war along the banks of the Rhine, earnestly inculcated upon the German princes the necessity of exterminating the enemies of Christ within their own territories. Other preachers followed his example; and the Jews, seized with consternation, retired to Nuremburg, and other cities, in which the emperour kindly received and protected them. Many of the christian bishops highly condemned the hermit's persecuting doctrine. St. Bernard in particular severely censured it; and, in a letter to the archbishop of Metz, advised to have the fiery zealot banished to his solitude. Not contented, however, with writing pathetick letters upon the subject, he repaired to Germany, where he afforded an efficacious protection to the Jews by the influence he derived from his talents, learning, and virtues.*

The persecution kindled by the Crusaders was not confined to Germany, but extended through the greatest part of Europe. The publick outcry was, "Let us exterminate the descendants of those, who crucified Jesus Christ; and let the name of Israel be no more remembered." But though vast multitudes

* Basnage, p. 617. Gregoire, p. 6.

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fell a sacrifice to the bigotry of the princes and people, a still greater number, driven to despair by the miseries they suffered, perished by suicide.*

While our attention is engaged, and our feelings agitated in reviewing the terrible calamities which the Jews were compelled to endure, we may be led to inquire, what are the causes of the reciprocal hatred which has subsisted between them and other nations? A celebrated author, who has deeply interested himself to ameliorate the condition of this persecuted nation, has given the following answer to this query.

"The resistance of the Jews in their last war against the Romans greatly incensed the latter, who took every opportunity of inspiring all the people of the empire with their prejudices. The Jews, driven from their country, but continually elevated by the imposture of false Messiahs, who added fuel to their fanaticism, could not tamely submit to a foreign yoke; and they preserved, even to the seventh century, a spirit of sedition, which excited hatred against them.

"Besides, people pardon each other least for thinking differently in respect to religion; and

* Basnage, p. 616.

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if there be any religion capable of offending the vanity of those, who are not followers of it, without doubt it is that of the Jews. Its divine author gave it this spirit with a view to raise a barrier between his people and the corruption of those idolatrous nations, by whom they were surrounded. Judaism is an exclusive worship; and though it imposes the obligation of universal philanthropy, its singularity tends to make other men be considered as odious and profane. As it professes that there is only one God, the Gentiles revolted against a dogma which sapped the very foundation of Paganism; besides, they never spoke of circumcision, the most ancient of all rites, but with a smile of derision; and the passage from ridicule to contempt is immediate. It is a principle in morals, that people do not hate what they despise; but the misfortunes of the Jews have rendered them an exception. Contempt consigned them to disgrace, and fury to torture. The Christians, beholding in them the authors of a Deicide, sometimes forgot the example of their Founder, who, when upon the cross, implored forgiveness for his executioners. Mahomet at first shewed a great respect for the Jews; but this sentiment soon gave place to fury. His Koran was filled with violent declamation against men, enemies

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to his doctrine; and the Mussulmans, who argued with the sabre, included the Jews in the proscription of all religions different from Islamism. Length of time gave strength to this animosity, which became hereditary, because fathers took care to inspire it into their children. Soon after, it was supposed that the Jews, irritated, but too weak to oppose striking vengeance to barbarous oppression, privately occasioned publick misfortunes; and the vulgar, adopting this idea without examination, massacred them in the most brutal manner. The Jews, forced to follow usurious practices, when they became rich excited envy by their opulence, which rendered them still more odious. Such are the sources of the hatred which the whole world have sworn against the Jewish people, and of the persecution that has every where followed them.

"The result of these events exhibits action and re-action. The Jews of the same sect have always been united together, because there was little disproportion among them of rank and fortune, and very little luxury. Their years of Jubilee brought them very near to the primitive equality, which civil institutions continually destroy; and their misfortunes have made this union closer, and strengthened its ties. But, being banished, proscribed, and

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every where abused, can they entertain any affection for their tyrants? They must indeed conceive an aversion to all those who are leagued against them; and particularly to the Christians, whom they consider as guilty intruders, for having eclipsed their religious splendour."*

CHAP. XIV.

State of the Jews in various parts of the east in the twelfth century. Of the princes of the captivity. The Israelites were numerous in Egypt, but only a small number was found in Palestine. Of those in the Turkish dominions, and in Italy, Germany, and France. St. Bernard exerts his influence in their behalf. They are favoured by pope Innocent II. and Alexander III. They become powerful in Spain during the reign of Alphonso VIII.

A. D. 1172. BENJAMIN of Tudela, a city in Navarre, in the twelfth century visited many regions both in the east and west for the purpose of ascertaining the situation of the Jewish people. He published an account of his travels,† and gave a minute relation of whatever was honourable and interesting to his nation. He even invented new countries, and mentioned kingdoms and cities, which did not then exist. A learned modern author, speaking of this work,

* The above extract is made from the English translation of Gregoire's Essay on the Physical, Moral, and Political Reformation of the Jews, p. 30, 31, 32.

† This work has been translated from the Hebrew into the French, by J. P. Barratier.

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and that of rabbi Petachiah, who travelled about the same period, observes, that "a wish to magnify the importance of their brethren is discernible in the writings of both; and, for their extreme credulity, both are justly censured. But, after every reasonable deduction is made on these accounts from the credibility of their narrative, much will still remain to interest an intelligent and cautious reader."*

Benjamin informs us, that the Jews in the east, in the twelfth century, enjoyed the peaceable exercise of their religion; and possessed several considerable synagogues. Four thousand of his brethren inhabited Bassorah, an island on the Tigris. Seven thousand resided at Almozal, answering to the ancient Nineveh. In this city our traveller found Zaccheus, a prince descended from the house of David, and a Jewish astronomer named Beren al Pherec, who officiated as a chaplain to Zin Aldin,† a Mahometan king. Passing through Rehoboth, in his way to Bagdat, he discovered three thousand Jews; and five hundred at Karchemish, famed for the defeat of Pharoah

* Butler's Horæ Biblicæ.

† It may appear surprising, that a Jewish astronomer should be chaplain to a Mahometan prince; but many of the Jews were induced to temporize, either through fear, or interested motives.—*Modern Universal History, Vol. XIII. p.* 262.

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Necho, and situate on the banks of the Euphrates.*

The celebrated academy of Pundebita had lost much of its original grandeur, and contained only a few learned rabbis, who superintended about two thousand of their brethren, part of whom applied themselves to the study of the law. The academy of Sora was also in a decayed condition; and that of Nahardea was only famed for a synagogue, which its superstitious inhabitants had built of materials conveyed from Jerusalem. The great men, who formerly resided in the eastern countries, had fled to the west; and the Jewish academies declined in consequence of their departure. But, though there were but few learned rabbis in the east, the Jews, according to our author's account, were still numerous; he informs us he found ten thousand of them at Obkeray, which city he pretends was built by king Jechoniah during the Babylonian captivity.†

Benjamin arrived at Bagdat during the reign of the caliph Mostanged, who highly favoured his nation, and retained a number of Jews in his service. This prince was well versed in the Hebrew language, and had acquired some knowledge of the Mosaic law. The city of

* Basnage, p. 619. † Ibid, 620.

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Bagdat contained about one thousand Jews, who possessed twenty eight synagogues. They were also allowed ten tribunals, under the direction of ten eminent men of their nation, who were chosen to transact their affairs. These chiefs were, however, subordinate to the prince of the captivity. Benjamin asserts, that the person who then enjoyed this dignity was styled lord by the Jews, and by the Mahometans, the son of David, he being, according to our author, lineally descended from that monarch. His authority extended over all his brethren in the dominions of the caliph; and from Syria to Indostan. Our traveller also affirmed, that this chief received regal honours; had an hundred guards to escort him when he visited the caliph; and, that a herald marched before him crying, prepare the way for the Lord, the son of David. The Jewish people in the most remote parts were, he says, obliged to receive their teachers from him by the imposition of hands; and he was enabled to support his dignity by the large presents and tribute, which he received from his nation.*

The existence of a succession of these imaginary potentates has been strenuously main-

* Basnage, p. 620.

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tained by Jewish authors. Their views were to aggrandize the glory of their nation, and deprive Christians of the force of the argument furnished by the prophecy of Jacob, concerning the termination of the Jewish polity and independence speedily after the coming of the Messiah.*

Some of the most learned of the Jewish rabbis, however, acknowledge, that the regal and judicial power has been abolished. David Kimki lamented the calamities of his nation, foretold by the prophet Hosea, and exclaimed, that "he saw in his time the accomplishment of the oracle; and those days of exile, in which there was neither prince or king of the house of David; but on the contrary, they were subjected to other nations." Abravanel also observes, that "Isaiah speaks of a new calamity the Jews were to suffer, viz. that they should have neither kingdom, sovereignty, nor judicial sceptre." The testimony of these eminent men clearly evinces, that the Israelites, deprived of jurisdiction in their native country, possessed only the shadow of authority in the east. Even Benjamin confesses, that his nation was tributary, that the synagogues were maintained by means of a patent

* Gisborne on the Christian Religion.

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given by the caliph, when he was promoted to the regal dignity; that the prince of the captivity purchased his privileges and grandeur; and that he received his power from this monarch by the imposition of hands.*

Leaving the province of Bagdat, our traveller passed through Resen, where he found five thousand of his brethren, who possessed a spacious synagogue. In Hila, about five miles from ancient Babylon, he discovered four synagogues, and ten thousand Jews. Passing eastward, he arrived at the banks of the river Chebar, where he found sixty synagogues. He asserted, that the prophet Ezekiel was buried on the banks of this river; that his tomb was preserved; and that both Jews and Persians resorted to it as a place of devotion. In Cufa, once the metropolis of the caliphs, he discovered nearly seven thousand of his nation, who possessed only one synagogue.†

Our traveller found the Jews numerous in Egypt, and computed thirty thousand of them in one city upon the frontiers of Ethiopia.

* The persecution, which the Jews in the east suffered in the preceding century renders it probable, that our author's account of the grandeur of the prince of the captivity is greatly exaggerated. Yet still he acknowledges, that his dignity was purchased by a tribute to the caliph, and by large presents to his officers.—*Basnage, p.* 20. *Modern Universal History, Vol. XIII. p.* 264.

† Basnage, p. 620.

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There were about two thousand Israelites and two synagogues at Misraim, at present Grand Cairo. The chief of all the synagogues in Egypt resided in this city; appointed the Jewish doctors; and supported the interest of his nation. Several parts of the land of Goshen were inhabited by Jews; two hundred were found in one place, in another five hundred; and nearly three thousand in the city of Goshen. About the same number resided at Alexandria, and but a few at Damietta.*

Our author found at Tyre about four hundred of his nation, most of whom were employed in the glass manufacture. There were, however, a few learned men among them, who were well versed in the Talmud. The Samaritans having abandoned their ancient capital, some of them retired to Cesarea, where he found about two hundred, and one hundred at Sichem, which had become the seat of their religion. They were extremely strict in solemnizing their festivals, and offering their sacrifices on Mount Gerizim.†

In Jerusalem, the ancient capital of the Jewish religion, Benjamin found only two hundred of his nation, who all resided together, and made but a mean figure in the metropolis.

* Basnage, p. 620. † Ibid, p. 622.

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They were not numerous in other cities of Judea; in one of which he found only two, in another twenty. Shunan contained about three hundred. At Ascalon there were five hundred and fifty three, Jews and Samaritans. Upper Galilee contained a larger number; many of the Israelites retired into this province after the destruction of Jerusalem, and founded the famous academy of Tiberias. Yet he discovered only one synagogue in this part of Judea.*

From Palestine our author passed into Greece, and found two hundred Jews, who resided in and about Mount Parnassus, and obtained a subsistence by cultivating vegetables. There were three hundred of this nation at Corinth, and two thousand at Thebes, who were either dyers, or silk weavers. There were a small number at Lepanto, Patras, and other parts of the Turkish empire; but they were neither numerous nor affluent. When Benjamin arrived at Constantinople, he discovered about two thousand of his nation, who resided in the suburb called Galata, or Pera, where they had formerly been settled by the emperour Theodosius. They were all silk weavers, or merchants. There were besides five hundred Caraites, who were separated by

* Basnage, p. 622.

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a wall from the other Jews, in order to prevent all intercourse between them. The remnants of the nation in the Ottoman empire were forbidden to ride on horses throughout the streets of the cities; and were hated and insulted both by Turks and Greeks.*

From Constantinople our traveller passed into Italy; and relates the dissensions, which then reigned between the inhabitants of Genoa, Pisa, and other republican cities. He observes, that the Jews were few in these parts; and that whatever party gained the ascendancy, they were sure to be oppressed. When he repaired to Rome, he found his brethren more numerous; among whom were several learned doctors, particularly rabbi Jechiel, who was superintendant of the pope's finances. Capua was no less famed for the number and learning of her doctors, though the city contained only three hundred Jews. Benjamin reckoned five hundred at Naples, two hundred at Salerno. There were others settled at Benevento, Ascoli, and Trani. The islands of Sicily and Corsica also contained a considerable number of Jews; particularly the former, where he discovered about two hundred at Messina, and five hundred at Palermo.†

* Basnage, p. 624. † Modern Universal Hist. Vol. XIII. p. 274.

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Our traveller passed from Italy into Germany, where he asserts, that he found his nation not only more numerous and affluent,* but also more learned, devout, and hospitable to strangers. They lamented the desolation of their city and temple; and earnestly expected a glorious recall to their once happy country. Those, however, who dwelt upon the banks of the Rhine, were uneasy on account of the long delay of the Messiah's appearance; and Benjamin confesses he was not able to console them by what he related respecting the state of their nation in the east.†

He concluded his tour with visiting the synagogues in France, in some of which he found but few Jews. Three hundred of his brethren resided at Narbonne, under the direction of the famous rabbi Calonymo, who had acquired great power and wealth, and was said to have been lineally descended from king David. In Montpelier there were many Jews, as well as Turks and Greeks, who resorted thither from foreign parts.

Lunel, a city in Languedoc, contained an academy, in which the Jews studied the divine

* Benjamin wrote an account of his travels about 1170; in seventy years, the Jews had recovered from the massacres of the Crusaders, mentioned in the preceding chapter.—*Gibbon, Vol. II. p.* 26.

† Basnage, p. 624.

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law with intense application. Our author also discovered an assembly at Paris, who were devoted to the study of the law, and received those of their nation who repaired to the city from foreign parts as brethren.*

It appears from the above account, and that of rabbi Petachiah,† a native of Ratisbon, who visited his nation at nearly the same period, that the Jews were in a declining state in many countries. In particular, their number was greatly diminished on the banks of the Euphrates; and in the ancient cities where they were formerly computed to have amounted to nine hundred thousand.

A. D. 1147. St. Bernard, whose humanity to the Jews has been noticed in the preceding chapter, continued to repress the violence of their enemies. He alleged, that it was necessary to tolerate them at present, in order to effect their future conversion; and made use of his influence over pope Innocent II. to inspire him with the same sentiments of gentleness and forbearance. When this pontiff made his grand entrance into Paris, they approached

* Basnage, p. 624.

† Rabbi Petachiah gives an account of some Jews he found in Tartary, who did not observe the traditions of the fathers. Upon his inquiring why they neglected the observance of these traditions, they answered, they had never heard of them.—*Modern Universal History.*

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him with profound respect, and presented him the roll, or volume of their law. Upon receiving it from their hands, he returned this answer, "I reverence the law given by God to Moses, but condemn your exposition of it, because you still expect the Messiah, whom the catholick church believes to be Christ, who liveth and reigneth with the Father, and the Holy Ghost." His successor, Alexander III. also favoured and protected the Jews, and prohibited the people from insulting them on their sabbaths, festivals, or any other occasion. Under such powerful patronage, they became flourishing, affluent, and learned in Rome, and several other cities in Italy.* A. D. 1170.

The Jews were no less powerful in Spain during part of the twelfth century. One of them named Joseph was prime minister to Alphonso VIII. and had a coach of state, and guards to attend him. At length, however, he was expelled from his office, by the treachery and intrigues of Gonzales, one of his dependents, who, having incurred the displeasure of his benefactor by his criminal conduct, resolved to escape the punishment he deserved, by effecting his ruin. Under pretence of filling the monarch's coffers, this wretch prevailed upon Alphonso to grant him eight of the prin-

* Basnage, p. 634.

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cipal Jews. These he caused to be put to death, and confiscated their effects. He next offered a much larger sum for twenty more. But the king thought it more honourable to seize their estates for defraying his expenses, than to deprive them both of their lives and property. This unhappy people, who rejoiced to be able to purchase their lives and liberty upon any terms, voluntarily poured immense sums into the treasury. Gonzales was soon after imprisoned by the king, and his fall established their tranquillity.*

Alphonso was afterwards induced to treat the Jews with great indulgence in consequence of his passion for a beautiful young Jewess, named Rachel, to whom he sacrificed his honour and interest. Her countrymen, seizing the advantage, grew extremely powerful and insolent, and the court and clergy were offended at the haughtiness of their behaviour. At length, the fury of their enemies rose to such an height, that they caused the young Jewess to be murdered. The nation, however, derived essential benefit from this prosperous epoch, and became numerous and affluent. Rabbi Eliakim, who was highly esteemed in Spain, and composed his ritual of all the ceremonies used in every synagogue, commonly

* Basnage, p. 635.

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styled, "The Ritual of the Universe," has computed that there were twelve thousand Jews in the city of Toledo. They were also in a flourishing state at Andalusia, where great numbers applied to the study of theology and the sciences. At length, they divided themselves into three different sects, of which Maimonides, who lived at this time, has given an account. This division was regarded by him as one of the fatal consequences of the abolition of the sanhedrim.*

CHAP. XV.

Of the learned men who flourished among the Jews during the twelfth century. An account of the impostors who pretended to be the Messiah, and of the calamities in which they involved their nation during this period.

DURING the twelfth century many celebrated Jewish rabbis appeared, whose abilities and learning did honour to their nation; and whose writings have furnished assistance towards understanding the Old Testament. They often, however, instead of explaining the literal sense, eagerly searched after mystical and allegorical interpretations; and gave a tedious and minute detail of the ceremonies, which had caused them to relinquish the spirit of their law.†

* Basnage, p. 635. † Ibid, 625.

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Nathan Ben Jechiel is ranked among the great men, who appeared in the twelfth century. He was the author of a work called Harak, in which he explained all the terms in the Talmud in so copious a manner, that he has exhausted the subject. He was chief of the Jewish academy at Rome; and died in that city in the year 1106.*

Abraham Ben Ezra, one of the greatest men of his age and nation, was born at Toledo in Spain, and styled by the Jews, the wise, great, and admirable doctor. He travelled for the purpose of acquiring knowledge; and far excelled his brethren in sacred and profane literature. A learned Italian writer† asserts, that "he was an able philosopher, physician, astronomer, mathematician, grammarian, and poet; and, that he was so well versed in Hebrew, Chaldaic, Arabic, and other languages, that he composed in them all with great facility." His method of explaining the scriptures differed from the other rabbis; for instead of seeking after mystic interpretations, he generally adhered to the literal meaning; and gave such proofs of his genius and good sense, that the Christians prefer him to the other Jewish expositors. His most celebrated work is, "Com-

* Basnage, p. 625.

† De Rossie's Hebrew Biography. Enfield's Philosophy.

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mentaries on the Old Testament."* He died at Rhodes, 1174, in the seventy fifth year of his age.†

Moses Maimonides, who was eminently distinguished among the learned men of this age, was born of an illustrious family at Cordova in Spain, in the year 1131. He boasted of being descended from the house of David, as did many of the Spanish Jews. He made such a rapid progress in science and literature, that his countrymen styled him the "eagle of doctors;" and asserted, that "of all their nation none ever so nearly approached to the wisdom and learning of their great founder and lawgiver as Moses the son of Maimon." At length, however, the superiority of his genius, and the vast fund of knowledge which he acquired, excited the envy and jealousy of the Jews. Perhaps also his connexion with Averroes, a celebrated Arabian philosopher, who was one of his preceptors, might have led him to adopt obnoxious opinions. His writings, particularly his Moreh Nevochim, or resolution of doubtful questions, soon raised him many opponents. The design of this work was

* He also wrote various theological, grammatical, mathematical, and astrological works, many of which remain in ancient libraries, not yet edited.

† Basnage, p. 626.

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to explain the meaning of several difficult and obscure words, phrases, metaphors, parables, allegories, &c. in scripture. It was written for the benefit of those who were in doubt whether they should interpret such passages according to the letter, or rather figuratively and metaphorically. It was asserted by many at this time, that the Mosaic rites and statutes had no foundation in reason; but were ordained by God upon a principle purely arbitrary.*

On the other side, Maimonides argued, that the Mosaic dispensation in general was instituted with a wisdom worthy of its divine author, and explained the causes and reasons of each particular branch of it. But he exhibited less respect for the decisions of the Talmud, than the other Jewish doctors who preceded him. Those of his nation who were most attached to these fables were highly offended. Rabbi Solomon, then chief of the synagogues at Montpelier, persuaded the doctors who studied under him to engage in defence of the Talmud. Accordingly they not only opposed the doctrine of Maimonides, but endeavoured to blast his reputation. They burnt his works, and excommunicated those

* Basnage, p. 627. Biographical Dictionary.

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who read them, and addicted themselves to the study of philosophy.*

The rabbis of Narbonne, with the great David Kimki at their head, exerted all their eloquence in defence of Maimonides, and excommunicated their brethren at Montpelier. This contention lasted forty years, and called forth the abilities of the learned men on both sides of the question. The schism to which this dispute gave rise was abolished in 1232.

Maimonides, finding his residence in Spain troublesome and hazardous, removed to Egypt, and settled at Cairo. His knowledge of the healing art induced the sultan of Egypt to choose him for his physician; and he employed his credit at court in protecting his nation. He also founded an academy at Alexandria for their benefit, and gained many pupils from various countries. They were, however, soon dispersed by persecution. Some assert, that this great man died in Egypt 1201; others, that his death took place in Palestine 1205.†

This learned Jew was not only master of many eastern languages, which was a singular accomplishment in his time, but was well versed in the Greek tongue, and had read the works of the Grecian philosophers, whom he

* Basnage, p. 627. Modern Univer. Hist. Vol. XIII. p. 287.

† Basnage, p. 637.

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frequently quotes. He was celebrated for his knowledge of the arts and sciences, as well as languages; was eminently distinguished as a physician; and in Talmudic learning excelled all his cotemporaries.* His writings are too numerous to be particularly mentioned.†

Solomon Ben Isaac Jarki is ranked among the illustrious rabbis of the twelfth century. He was born 1104, at Troyes in Champagne, in France. Having acquired a large fund of Jewish learning, he travelled through Germany, Italy, Greece, Jerusalem, Palestine and Egypt, where he had an interview with Maimonides. From Egypt he passed to Persia, and thence to Tartary and Muscovy. After his return to Europe, he visited all the academies, and disputed against the professors, upon any questions proposed by them. He was well versed in physick and astronomy, and master of several languages besides the Hebrew. He wrote Commentaries on the Pentateuch, and some of the Prophets; also on the Gemara, which procured him the title of Prince of Commentators. He died at Troyes, 1180.‡

* Enfield's Philosophy, Vol. II. p. 205.

† He was the author of twenty five noted works, besides some others of less importance.—*Modern Universal History, Vol. XIII. p. 271.*

‡ Basnage, p. 657. General Biographical Dictionary.

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The family of the Kimkis has been eminently distinguished in the annals of Jewish literature. Joseph Kimki was a man of great learning, but a violent enemy to the Christians, whom he inveighed against in his writings. David Kimki, his son, one of the most zealous defenders of Maimonides, flourished in Spain at the end of the twelfth, and at the commencement of the thirteenth century. This celebrated rabbi far excelled his father in ability and learning, and had not imbibed such strong prejudices against the Christians. His writings have been held in such high estimation by his nation, that they supposed it impossible to attain to any eminence in letters and theology without studying them. He composed a grammar and dictionary of the Hebrew language, by which he acquired the reputation of excelling all the Jews who preceded him in grammatical knowledge. He also was the author of a Commentary on the Psalms, and other books of the Old Testament. Part of this work has been translated into Latin, and inserted in the Bibles of Venice and Basil. Moses Kimki, his brother, was also distinguished for his learning; and has written a treatise, styled the Garden of Delight, the

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manuscript of which was preserved in the Vatican library.*

Three celebrated rabbis, named Levi, or Halevi, appeared during the twelfth century. Abraham Halevi was a learned cabbalistical Jew, who, having placed himself at the head of the traditional party, violently attacked the Caraites; but, being inferiour to them in point of argument, he had resource to Alphonso VII. for whom he had performed signal services, and who rewarded him by commanding his opponents to be silent.†

Juda Levi was the author of the Cosri, a polemical treatise on religion, especially the Jewish; and a pathetick elegy, in which he deplored the destruction of Jerusalem.‡

Another learned rabbi, named Judas Halevi, was born at Cologn; and after many conferences with the Christians became a convert, and was baptized by the name of Herman. After he embraced christianity, he entered among the regular canons of St. Augustine.§

Some learned Jewish women appeared during the twelfth century. The rabbi Petachiah, who visited the synagogues of his nation at

* Basnage, p. 630. † Ibid.

‡ This elegy has been translated by Mr. Bing, and inserted in a note of Gregoire's work on the Reformation of the Jews, p. 280.

§ Basnage, p. 630.

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that period, has asserted, that the daughter of the prince of the captivity was so well versed in the law and Talmud, that many resorted to her for instruction, and that she read lectures through the lattice of her window, in order to be heard without being seen by her pupils.

It appears from the Jewish annals, that some of the nation have been raised to the highest offices in the courts of princes. Others have acquired applause at the head of armies; in particular, the celebrated don Solomon, a Portuguese Jew, who was as much distinguished for his knowledge in philosophy, as for his skill in the military department. His merit raised him, in 1190, to the dignity of field-master-general; and he discharged the duties of his office with such fidelity, that he soon obtained the command of the whole army. The envy and jealousy of the Grandees was at length excited by his valour and success. But he subdued their enmity by his remarkable humility and moderation.*

In the twelfth century several learned Jews renounced their religion. For instance, Samuel Ben Jehudah, or, as he is commonly called, Asmouil, deserted the synagogue, and professed the Mahometan faith. In order to prove the sincerity of his conversion, in 1174

* Basnage, p. 630.

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he wrote a book against his nation, in which he charges them with having altered the law of Moses. This accusation was received with such applause by the Mahometans, that they forbade the quoting or translating any part of the Pentateuch according to the Jewish or Christian copies.*

One of the christian converts received the name of Peter Alphonso at his baptism. After he deserted the synagogue, he wrote dialogues against the Jews, and was appointed physician to Alphonso VII. king of Castile and Leon. He died in the year 1108.†

It is indeed surprising, that the learned rabbis of the twelfth century did not sufficiently enlighten their nation as to prevent their being frequently duped by impostors. But the number of those who appeared in this age was greater than in any preceding or subsequent century. In 1137, a false Christ arose in France, and engaged his followers to hold unlawful assemblies. In consequence of the impostor's crimes, the government caused many of the synagogues to be demolished. But at length he and a large number of his followers were apprehended and put to death.‡

* Basnage, p. 630. † Modern Univer. Hist. Vol. XIII. p. 291.
‡ Jortin's Remarks, Vol. II. p. 304.

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The following year the Persians were disturbed by a Jew, who called himself the Messiah; and collected a formidable army of his nation. The Persian monarch hired him to disband his soldiers; but when the stipulated sum was paid, the king finding himself out of danger, compelled the disarmed Jews to reimburse him the money, and caused the impostor to be beheaded.*

In 1157, another false Messiah appeared in Spain. He was a native of Cordova, and was supported in his imposture by one of the greatest rabbis in that city, who had previously written a book to prove the near approach of his manifestation by the stars. The majority of the most intelligent Jews regarded him as insane; but the great body of this infatuated people believed in him, and many were ruined by their blind credulity.†

Ten years after, another impostor declared that the Messiah would manifest himself in the course of a year. This person appeared in the kingdom of Fez, and involved the Jews, who were dispersed through the country, in a new persecution.

The same year an Arabian Jew assumed the title of the Messiah, and pretended to work miracles, and gained many followers. But at

* Basnage, p. 632. † Ibid. Jortin's Remarks, Vol. II. p. 304.

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length he was apprehended, and brought before the Arabian king. When he was questioned by the monarch, what had induced him to act this imposture, he boldly replied, that he was indeed a prophet sent from God. The king then asked him, what miracle he could perform to confirm his mission? Cut off my head, said he, and I will return to life again.* The monarch took him at his word, promising to believe in him, if his prediction was fulfilled. After his death his deluded followers cherished the expectation, that though he did not immediately rise from the dead, he would at length reanimate their hopes by his appearance. But they were compelled to give up the idea, and were severely fined and punished for their blind credulity.†

Some time after, a Jew who dwelt beyond the Euphrates, called himself the Messiah, and drew vast multitudes after him. He founded his pretensions on his having been a leper, and being wonderfully healed in one night of this obstinate disease. The Jewish doctors soon persuaded him and his followers, that this supposed miracle was not a sufficient evidence of

* This is supposed to have been an artifice of the impostor, who preferred a speedy death to the cruel and lingering torture to which he would otherwise have been exposed.

† Basnage, p. 632.

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his mission. The populace became ashamed of their blind credulity; but, as they had taken arms in his cause, a fresh persecution was raised against them. One of their writers informs us, that, exhausted with their sufferings on his account, ten thousand of this miserable people renounced their religion; which has rendered the memory of this impostor odious to the whole nation.*

In the year 1174, another pretended Messiah arose in Persia. This impostor seduced multitudes of the common people, and involved his nation in a new and severe persecution.

A Jew, named David Almusser, appeared in Moravia, in the year 1196, who set up for the Messiah, and boasted that he possessed the power of rendering himself invisible whenever he pleased. Vast multitudes followed him, and were deceived by his artifice. In order to prevent the ill consequences of his popularity, the king promised him his life on condition that he would surrender himself. He complied; but the prince caused him to be imprisoned. He had the address, however, to escape; and for some time eluded all pursuit. At length the king summoned the Jews to deliver him up; and, in order to avoid a fresh

* Basnage. n. 632.

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persecution, they complied. He was put to death, and a heavy fine imposed upon his nation.*

David Alroi, or El-David, was the most famous impostor, who appeared during the twelfth century. He was a native of Almaria, which city contained about one thousand Jews, who paid tribute to the king of Persia. In the year 1199 he assumed the title of the Messiah; and being a man of learning, and well versed in all the arts of deception, he attracted many followers. After he had deluded the populace by his pretended miracles, he prevailed upon them to arm themselves in his cause. The Persian king, alarmed at the rapid progress of the insurgents, commanded the impostor to repair to court, promising, that if he proved himself the Messiah, he would acknowledge him as a king, sent from heaven. El-David, contrary to expectation, obeyed the summons, and assured the king that he was really the Messiah. Upon which he was ordered to be imprisoned till he could prove his mission by extricating himself by a miracle. He had the address to escape, and though the king despatched messengers in search of the impostor, they were unable to find and apprehend him. But at length, upon a promise of receiving ten

* Basnage, p. 632. Jortin's Remarks, Vol. II. p. 304.

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thousand crowns, his father-in-law consented to betray and put him to death. Vast numbers who had been deluded by him were cruelly slaughtered.*

After giving an account of the false Messiahs who appeared among the Jews, Dr. Jortin remarks, "It may seem strange they should have rejected Christ, who gave them so many proofs of his mission, and yet should follow every impostor who pretended to be the Messiah, without offering any sufficient or even plausible evidence of it. The reason is plain; our Saviour, by not setting up a temporal kingdom, dashed all their worldly views at once; but the claimers of the title of Messiah began with promises of delivering them from their enemies, and restoring to them their country, and their lost liberties."†.

* Basnage, p. 633. † Jortin's Remarks, Vol. II. p. 319.

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CHAP. XVI.

Of the Jews in England. William the conqueror brings a colony of them into the kingdom. They are favoured by William Rufus. Henry III. grants them new cemeteries in London. They are massacred at the coronation of Richard I. Their sufferings from the Crusaders. Five hundred perish by suicide in York Castle. Of the cruel oppression they suffered under king John. They are also oppressed by Henry III. They are accused of adulterating the coin; two hundred and eighty are executed for that crime in London. They are expelled from England by Edward I.

It is difficult to ascertain at what period the Jews first settled in England.* But it appears that there were considerable numbers established in the kingdom before the conquest.† William the conqueror brought a large colony of this nation from Rouen to Nor-

* From the spread of christianity among the Britons, previous to its establishment by Constantine, it is reasonable to suppose there had been some Jews in England at an early period. It appears, that the inroads of the Saxons and Danes, having obliterated much of the imperfect conversion of the native inhabitants of Britain, the Jews, it is said, with singular liberality, patronized the civilization of these barbarous heathens, by endowing christian monasteries.—*Monthly Magazine, &c.* 1796.

† Basnage asserts, that the English Jews were banished from the kingdom in the beginning of the eleventh century. But does not mention on what account, or under what monarch the expulsion took place.

Dr. Tovey, the author of a work called Anglia Judaica, who has taken great pains to search after the antiquities of the Hebrew nation in England, contends for the existence of Jews in the kingdom, coeval with Julius Cæsar, and says nothing of any banishment of them prior to that of Edward I.—*Adams' Religious World Displayed, Vol. I. p.* 11.

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mandy for a stipulated sum of money, which they presented him. After he had introduced them, he assigned them a place to inhabit, and carry on commerce. It appears by an ancient law, mentioned by Sir Henry Spelman, that they were mere vassals to the king, and could not dispose of their persons or property without his consent.

During the feudal ages, the Jews appear to have been the most opulent, polished, and literary portion of the laity. They were the only bankers, or, as the vulgar termed them, the usurers of the times. They conducted what then existed of foreign trade; and often visited the civilized south of Europe. They wrought most of the gold and silver ornaments for churches.

William Rufus, who was an irreligious prince, highly favoured this singular people; and not only permitted, but encouraged them to enter into solemn contests with his bishops concerning the true faith. It is said, that he sent for some learned christian divines and rabbis, and ordered them fairly to dispute the question of their religion in his presence; assuring them he was perfectly indifferent between them, and that he would embrace that doctrine which, upon comparison, appeared to be supported by the most solid arguments. Ac-

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cordingly, it is related, that there was a publick meeting of the chief leaders on both sides in London, where the Jews opposed the Christians with so much energy, that the bishops and clergy were not without some solicitude how the dispute might terminate. No other class of men were at this time sufficiently enlightened to engage with the priesthood. Some young Jews were even so imprudent as to value themselves upon their infidelity. It has been asserted, that they became so powerful and opulent towards the conclusion of the reign of William Rufus, that they not only held publick disputes, but endeavoured by pecuniary bribes and other allurements to induce the poor to embrace their religion.*

A. D. 1177. Henry II. has been highly censured by Monkish writers for tolerating and protecting the Jews. They were so numerous in his reign, that, possessing only one burying-ground in the city of London, they petitioned the king to allow them some new cemeteries. This request was granted; and places to inter their dead were assigned them on the outside of every city where they dwelt. In this reign one Joshua, a Jew, furnished the rebels in Ireland with large sums of money; and their op-

* Hume's History of England, Vol. I. p. 189. Molloy De Jure Maritimo, p. 400.

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ulence had rendered them so presumptuous as to ridicule the higher dignitaries of the church. We may in part attribute to them the spirit which dictated the constitution of Clarendon.* In 1188, the parliament at Northampton proposed to assess them at 60,000*l.* and the Christians at 70,000*l.* towards the projected war. The Jews must, therefore, have been vastly rich, or the parliament extremely tyrannical. But this nation, from their first residence in England, were always considered as vassals to the crown, who might be pillaged according to the caprice of the reigning sovereign.†

When Richard I. ascended the throne, this people brought large presents in order to secure the royal protection. Many having hastened from remote parts of England to Westminster, the court and populace imagined they had conspired to bewitch the king,‡ and an edict was issued to prevent their presence at the coronation. But considerable numbers, whose curiosity was greater than their pru- A. D. 1189.

* Decrees enacted by the council of Clarendon, which Henry II. convened in order to check the usurpations of the pope and clergy. *Hume, Vol. I.*

† Monthly Magazine and British Register, 1796. Molloy De Jure Maritimo.

‡ A superstitious idea that the Jews were most of them conjurors was prevalent during the dark ages.—*Basnage, p.* 638.

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dence, fancied they might pass unobserved among the crowd, and ventured to insinuate themselves into the abbey. Upon being discovered, they fled in great consternation; but the people pursued them and murdered several.*

A rumour spread rapidly through the city, that the king, in honour of the festival, had given orders for the massacre of the Jews; a command so agreeable was instantly executed on all who fell into the hands of the populace. Those who remained at home were exposed to equal danger; the people moved by rapacity and zeal broke into their houses, which they plundered, after having murdered the owners. Where the Jews barricaded their doors and defended themselves with vigour, the rabble set fire to the houses, and made way through the flames to exercise their pillage and violence. The usual licentiousness of London, which the sovereign power with difficulty restrained, broke out with fury, and continued these outrages. The inhabitants of the other cities of England, hearing of the slaughter of this unhappy people in the metropolis, imitated the example; and, though the government published a proclamation the day after the coronation, in order to suppress the fury of the popu-

* Hume's History of England. Smollet's History of England.

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lace, the persecution was continued the greater part of the year.*

This miserable race suffered a still more severe persecution, when Richard I. impelled more by the love of glory than by superstition engaged in the crusades.† They had furnished him with vast sums towards the expedition; but this did not satisfy the people, whose zeal against an unbelieving race was heightened by the holy war; and who complained of the conduct as well as the faith of the Jews. The prejudices of the age had made the lending of money on interest pass by the invidious name of usury; yet the necessity of the practice had still continued it, and the greater part of this dealing fell every where into the hands of the Jews, who, being already infamous on account of their religion, had no honour to lose. They were therefore apt to exercise a profession, odious in itself, by every kind of rigour, and even sometimes by rapine and extortion. The industry and frugality of this nation had put them in possession of all the ready money which the idleness and profusion, common to

* Hume's History of England.

† This was the third crusade. Saladin, the sultan of Egypt and Syria, had taken the city of Jerusalem from the Christians, and placed on its walls the banners of Mahomet. This incident rekindled with fresh fury the zeal of the ecclesiastical military adventurers among the Christians.

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the English and other European nations, enabled them to lend at an exorbitant and unequal interest.*

Those who were preparing for the holy war, felt indignant that the enemies of Christ should abound in wealth, while they, who supposed themselves his peculiar friends and favourites, should be obliged to deprive their families of necessaries in order to defray the expenses of the crusades. Hence they persuaded themselves it would be a meritorious act to destroy the descendants of those who crucified our Saviour, and apply their wealth to this holy enterprize. Though the king at his departure had left orders that they should not be molested; yet as soon as he quitted the kingdom their fury broke out anew. They destroyed many of these wretched people at Norwich, Stamford, and other places, and seized upon their property. The murderers took shipping as soon as possible, and fled to Jerusalem, not so much as one of them being detained by the

* Hume, Vol. I. p. 135.

The Jews took this extravagant interest with the dreadful prospect of murder before their eyes, and a certainty of paying a large portion of it to the king. It is, therefore, natural to suppose, that a people who were exposed to such cruelties and insults, and had so uncertain an enjoyment of their riches, would carry usury to the utmost extremity.—*Macpherson on Commerce.*

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magistrates, or any further inquiry made respecting their injustice and cruelty.*

A still more horrid transaction took place at York, where the Jews were great usurers; and, as they lived in a splendid manner, their opulence excited envy, and increased the hatred against them. The populace in this city assembled to inflict the same barbarities upon them, which their countrymen had suffered in London, and other places. Upon which, the principal persons among this people applied to the governour of York Castle, and prevailed upon him to grant them an asylum. The place was sufficiently strong for their defence. But a suspicion arising, that the governour, who frequently went out into the city, had combined with their enemies to destroy them, they one day refused him entrance. He complained to the sheriff, and to the heads of the violent party who were deeply indebt to the Jews, and was ordered to attack the castle. The sheriff, however, repented of, and revoked the order, and the superiour citizens refused their aid. But, as the fury of the populace could be appeased only by murder and robbery, an attack was made.† When the Jews

* Monthly Magazine and British Register, 1796.

† A late writer asserts, that the leader of the rabble who attacked the castle was a canon regular whose zeal was so fervent, that he

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found that they could not hold out any longer, and their offers of purchasing their lives with money were rejected, they took the horrid resolution of destroying themselves, one of the most desperate among them exclaiming in despair, that "it was better to die courageously for the law, than to fall into the hands of the Christians." Accordingly, after setting fire to the towers of the castle, and destroying their wives and children, they put a period to their own lives. Five hundred perished at this time. A few, who surrendered in hopes of mercy, were murdered by the populace.*

Immediately after this dreadful catastrophe, those who were indebted to the Jews, repaired to the cathedral where the bonds were deposited, compelled the officer to deliver the obligations, and discharged their debts by burning them in the church, with great solemnity. They also entered and plundered the desolate

stood by them in his surplice, which he considered as a coat of mail, and reiteratedly exclaimed, "Destroy the enemies of Jesus." This spiritual laconism invigorated the arm of men, who perhaps wanted no other stimulative than the hopes of obtaining the immense property of the besieged. The same author also asserts, that a venerable rabbi, who was highly esteemed among his brethren, first proposed to them to perish by suicide, in order to elude the tortures which they expected would be inflicted upon them if they fell into the hands of their enemies.—*Curiosities of Literature, V. II. p. 427.*

* Basnage, p. 638. Anderson, Vol. I. p. 224. Macpherson, Vol. I. p. 83.

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houses which belonged to the Jews. The king, incensed at this insult to his authority, ordered the bishop of Ely, at that time chief justice of the realm, to make severe examples of the guilty. But before he arrived in Yorkshire, the principal offenders had fled into Scotland, and the city of London, imputing what had happened to the ungoverned fury of the multitude, the prelate contented himself with depriving the high sheriff and governour of their offices, and levying fines upon the most opulent of the inhabitants.*

The cruel persecutions which the Jews suffered during the reign of Richard, had induced many of the wealthiest among them to leave the kingdom. The consequent diminution of the revenue was so sensibly felt, that John, upon his accession to the throne, used various arts to allure them to return. He granted them, upon receiving a large sum of money, a charter which confirmed all their ancient privileges; and allowed them to hold land, to build synagogues, and name an high priest by the title A. D. 1199.

* Basnage, p. 688. Smollet's History of England, Vol. II. p. 227.

When the king employed Granville the justiciary to inquire into the authors of these crimes, the guilt was found to involve so many of the most considerable citizens, that it was deemed more prudent to drop the prosecution, and very few suffered the punishment due to this enormity.—*Hume's History of England, Vol. I. p.* 351.

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of Presbyter Judeorum.* Many of this oppressed people returned, and were afterwards more cruelly plundered than ever. Their exorbitant usury, united with the religious prejudices of the age, had rendered them so odious to the people, that they were continually demanding their expulsion, or rather extermination. But the English kings found a more advantageous way of punishing them by heavy fines. This procedure proved to the Jews, that their extortions would not only be tolerated, but encouraged, if they were well paid for. This compelled them to rise in their demands upon those who applied to them for the use of money. And thus a system of usurious oppression was at the same time prohibited by law, and sanctioned by the practice of the sovereigns, who used them as their instruments to fleece the people in order to fill their own coffers.†

* By the canon law no Jews could erect a synagogue; for if they attempted to build these places of worship they might be seized by the crown.—*Matthew Paris's History of England. Macpherson on Commerce.*

† The kings even went so far as to claim the whole property of the Jews. They were to reside only in such places as they assigned them, so that their officers might on all occasions find them and their families; they were not suffered to remove without special license. They were banished, executed, and subjected to fines and ransoms whenever the kings thought proper, and were sold or mortgaged to those who would advance money or their assignment. They were always obliged to wear a disgraceful mark of distinction on their garments. The revenue arising from their wealth was so

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King John, regardless of the privileges which the Jews had purchased from him in the beginning of his reign, ordered the whole of them, women as well as men, to be imprisoned and tormented till they should pay 66,000 marks. The ransom required from a wealthy Jew of Bristol was 10,000 marks of silver; and on his refusing to pay that ruinous fine, he ordered one of his teeth to be extracted every day, to which the unhappy man submitted seven days, and on the eighth agreed to satisfy the king's rapacity. Isaac, a Jew of Norwich, became bound to pay 10,000 marks. It is asserted by some historians,* that the king, not satisfied with the vast sums extorted from this miserable people, confiscated all their property, and expelled them from the kingdom. It appears, however, that they soon returned. A. D. 1210.

Henry III. liberated such Jews as were in prison, and ordered them to be protected against the cruelty of the Crusaders.† In 1233 this monarch founded a seminary, where 1216.

great, that there was a particular office established for the management of it, called the Exchequer of the Jews.—*Molloy De Jure Maritimo, p.* 407, 408.

* Matthew Paris. Macpherson, Vol. I. p. 376.

† The Jews were so deeply alarmed with the persecution which their brethren in France, Spain, and Germany, suffered at this time from the Crusaders, that they purchased an edict from the king to preserve them from similar outrages.—*Basnage, p.* 678.

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Jewish converts might be supported without labour or usury. This induced many of the nation to profess christianity; and the house continued till after their expulsion from England.*

Upon a petition of the inhabitants of Newcastle, the king granted them the inhospitable privilege, that no Jew should reside among them. During this reign the archbishop of Canterbury, and the bishops of Lincoln and Norwich, in order to expel the Jews for want of sustenance, published injunctions through their respective dioceses, that no Christian should presume to sell them any provisions under pain of excommunication. The prior of Dunstable, however, about the same period, granted to several Jews liberty to reside within his domains, in consideration of the annual payment of two silver spoons.†

A. D. 1235. The Jews of Norwich were accused of having stolen a christian child and kept him a year, that they might circumcise and crucify him at the ensuing passover; but being detected previously to that period, they suffered a severe punishment. In London they were also accused of murder,‡ and, after enduring

* Basnage, p. 679. † Monthly Magazine, 1796.

‡ It appears probable, that most, if not all the accusations of this kind were made against the Jews to give a better pretence for ex-

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various vexations and torments, were deprived of a third part of all their estates. This, however, did not satisfy the insatiable king, who soon after renewed his extortions. This wretched people were accused of coining false money, and counterfeiting the prince's seal; and under these pretences were loaded with enormous taxes. In 1241, 20,000 marks were exacted from them. Two years after, a Jew, named Aaron, of York, was compelled to pay four gold and four thousand silver marks. Seven years after the same man was accused of forgery, and condemned to pay four thousand marks of gold and fourteen thousand of silver. The high penalty imposed upon him, which it seems he was thought able to pay, is rather a presumption of his innocence than of his guilt.*

New supplies were demanded from the Jews for carrying on the Spanish war. Irritated to the highest degree by this oppression, they requested permission to depart from England for some more propitious and friendly country.† A. D. 1254.

torting their money; for according to Basnage those of London were accused of murder, on their refusal to pay the great sums the king demanded. The least surmise, made upon the slightest foundation, obtained credit among their enemies, who sought their destruction.

* Hume's History of England.

† Elias, a London Jew, undertook to plead for his brethren before the council; and made a pathetick speech, representing the im-

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But this they were refused, and compelled to pay part of the contribution. The following year the king renewed these extortions. He represented, that notwithstanding the taxes he had raised, he still continued poor and involved in debt; and declared, that "he must have money from any hand, from any quarter, or by any means." He then demanded eight thousand marks of the Jews, and, upon their pleading insolvency, sold them to his brother Richard for that sum. It was expected he would demand a rigorous payment of the debt; but he compassionated their situation, and was convinced of their poverty and inability.

A. D. 1262. The hatred of the people against the Hebrew nation had, during the reign of Henry, arrived at such a height, that, when the barons appeared in arms against the king, they endeavoured to attach the citizens of London to their interest by massacring seven hundred of this devoted race. An attempt, which was made by one of the nation to oblige a Christian to pay an enormous interest for a loan of money, is said to have afforded a pretence for this barbarous

possibility of their paying the sum demanded. Several instances are related by Basnage of the Jews bribing their judges to be favourable to them. In particular, John Lunel, though in the ecclesiastical line, was accused of receiving large sums from many Jews for his protecting them at the bar, and diminishing their taxes. Page 679.

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act.* They first plundered their houses, and burnt their new synagogue to the ground.† It was however rebuilt; but in 1270 taken from them by the king and given to the friars penitents, who had complained that "they were not able to make the body of Christ in quiet for the great howlings the Jews made during their worship.‡

In the third year of the reign of Edward I. A. D. 1276. a law passed the commons concerning Judaism which seemed to promise this unhappy people a qualified security. The apparent design of it was to introduce a regularity in the revenue exacted from them, which had hitherto consisted of arbitrary taxes levied upon them by the king. This statute prohibited the usury of the Jews, but allowed them to purchase houses and lands.§ No Christian was, how-

* Macpherson on Commerce.

† This synagogue was built during the time the Jews were most favoured by king Henry; and surpassed in magnificence the christian churches. After this synagogue was seized by the king, it was dedicated to the blessed virgin.—*M. Paris's Hist. of Eng. p.* 393.

‡ The learned author of Anglia Judaica observes, "that the friars were situated in Old Jewry, and having but a small dark chapel belonging to their friary, thought the Jews' fine synagogue, which stood next to it, more convenient for them, and therefore begged it of the king, and furnished him with that reason for it."—*David Levi's Letters to Priestley, p.* 6.

§ Among other curious particulars contained in this statute, with regard to the terms on which the Jews were tolerated in England, by the second section, "the good Christians were not to take above half their substance."—*Observations on the statutes, p.* 180.

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ever, permitted to lodge in their dwellings; and every Jew above seven years of age was obliged to wear a peculiar mark of two cables joined upon his upper garment.

A. D. 1287. King Edward, however, whose prejudices against this unhappy people were increased by his expedition into the holy land, treated them with great rigour. He forbade their selling or assigning their debts without his license. He ordered all their repositories throughout the kingdom to be searched, and established an inquisition to take cognizance of those who neglected to wear the distinguishing badges. The oppression and misery under which they continually groaned appear to have rendered them regardless of character; and the frequent extortion of vast sums from them* seems to have made them imagine every method justifiable, which they could take to indemnify themselves. They were accused of adulterating the coin, circulating counterfeit money, and making fraudulent exchanges. In consequence of their guilt, and the outcry raised against them, all the Jews in England were imprisoned on one day, and two hundred and

* It was computed, that the Jews paid the crown in the space of seven years, viz. from the fiftieth year of Henry III. to the second year of Edward I no less than four hundred and twenty thousand pounds, or two hundred and sixty thousand pounds of our modern money.—*Anderson on Commerce, Vol. I. p. 822.*

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eighty executed in London, besides vast numbers in other parts of the kingdom. Their houses and lands, as well as the goods of multitudes, were sold and confiscated. The king, lest it should be suspected that the riches of the sufferers were the chief part of their guilt, ordered a moiety of the money raised by these confiscations to be set apart, and bestowed upon such as were willing to be converted to christianity. But resentment was more prevalent with them than any temptation from their poverty; and very few could be induced by interest to embrace the religion of their persecutors.*

About this time king Edward, prompted by his zeal and rapacity, ordered the Jews to be banished from the kingdom, and never to return, upon pain of death. He seized at once their whole property, and allowed them only money sufficient to bear their expenses into foreign countries, where new persecutions and extortions awaited them.† But the seamen of A. D. 1290.

* Basnage, p. 680. Macpherson, Vol. I. p. 482. Hume, Vol. II. p. 4.

† The clergy were so well pleased with the banishment of the Jews, that they granted a tenth of their beneficies to the king; and afterwards joined with the nobility in obliging him with a fifteenth of their temporalities, to make some amends for the loss he sustained by the expulsion of a people, from whom his predecessors had exacted considerable subsidies in the emergency of affairs.—*Smollet, Vol. I. p.* 140.

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the cinque ports despoiled most of them of this small pittance, and even threw some hundreds of this miserable people into the sea. The king inflicted a capital punishment upon the perpetrators of this crime. The number of those who were expelled amounted to sixteen thousand five hundred and eleven. Edward had previously banished them from his territories in France. After this expulsion, the Jews never appeared again in a body in England during three hundred and fifty years.*

CHAP. XVII.

State of the Jews in France. They are expelled the kingdom by Philip Augustus. They are severely persecuted under the reign of Lewis IX. who at length banishes them from his dominions. Severe laws enacted against them by the duke of Brittany, and the councils of Lyons and Vienne. The Jews are recalled by Philip the bold. They are banished by Philip the fair, and recalled by Lewis XI. Irruption of the shepherds, and their cruelty. The Jews are accused of causing the rivers, wells, &c. to be poisoned. The terrible punishment they suffered for this supposed crime. They are banished by Philip the tall. They invent bills of exchange. They are recalled by John II. They are accused of various crimes, and cruelly treated during the reign of Charles VI. They are finally expelled the French dominions.

WHILE the Jews in England were enduring all kinds of oppression and misery, their brethren in France were subjected to similar suffer-

* Anderson on Commerce, Vol. I. p. 322. Macpherson, Vol. I. p. 450. Henry's History of Britain, Vol. IV. 46.

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ings and persecution. About the year 1182, king Philip, surnamed the august, under pretence of piety and zeal for the honour of God, banished them from his dominions,* and confiscated their estates. They were permitted to retain only what could be collected from the sale of their furniture; for which they found it difficult to obtain purchasers. It is even said, that they were robbed of the small sums they were enabled to raise, and reduced to the greatest misery, and that many fell victims to these tyrannical proceedings. Soon after, however, the king ordered them to be recalled; and upon finding that this measure excited the resentment of the Zealots, he excused himself by alleging, that his object was to extort money from them to defray the expenses of the crusade.†

After the Jews were resettled in the kingdom, they resumed their former usurious practices, and accumulated wealth, with which they purchased lands.‡ The king at first connived A. D. 1218.

* The murder of a youth named Richard, was laid to their charge, and served as a pretence for expelling them from France. *Picart*, p. 173.

† Basnage, p. 636.

‡ During the reign of Philip Augustus, the Jews were in some measure the property of the lord in whose territories they resided; but servitude did not always prevent them from becoming the possessors of land. We even find that in France they were the

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at their extortions, because they had bought his protection; but, upon the remonstrance of his people, new laws were enacted to remedy this evil.

A. D. 1230. Lewis IX. surnamed the saint, in the beginning of his reign called a council at Melun; in which a new law was enacted, expressly prohibiting all his subjects from borrowing any money of the Jews. It appears from various edicts, that the effects of all this unhappy people who were settled in the kingdom belonged to the barons, within whose territories they had fixed their residence. They were forbidden by the law to change their abode without the permission of their lord, who was empowered to follow and claim them as fugitive slaves even in the royal domain. It also appears that they were regarded as an object of traffick, and transferred with the land from one proprietor to another, and sometimes sold separately, their value being estimated according to their talents and industry. The spirit of persecution was carried still further; for, if a Jew became a convert to christianity, the whole of his property was confiscated to the

owners of vast domains; yet it may be readily perceived that it was a matter of no great difficulty to deprive these of their wealth, who were not masters of their own persons.—*Gregoire, p.* 10.

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use of his lord.* The passion for extorting wealth from this miserable race was so vehement, "that a conversion was considered as a bankruptcy, and even paradise did not possess the right of asylum."†

Saint Lewis not only sanctioned and confirmed, but even extended these oppressive laws. He ordered the Jews to be severely fined if they neglected to wear a distinguishing and disgraceful badge on their garments, and prohibited them from having any intercourse with the Christians. During his reign, when a Jew appeared in evidence against a Christian, he was compelled to swear by the ten names of God; and his oath was accompanied with a thousand imprecations upon his own head, if he deviated from the truth. The person who administered the oath thus addressed him, "May the Lord God send you a continual fever or ague, if you are guilty of perjury;

* This singular custom of confiscating all the goods of the Jews who embraced christianity, was first introduced into France, and is known only by the law which suppressed it, given at Basville, 1392. Thus by a strange and impious inconsistency, this wretched people at one time incurred a severe penalty by renouncing Judaism; at another epoch, those in the same country who refused to profess christianity were ordered to be burnt. The practice of confiscating the property of those Jews who professed christianity begun under the feudal government, and was continued in most parts of Europe till the end of the fourteenth century.—*Montesquieu's Works. French Encyclopedia.*

† Essay on Publick Happiness, Vol. II. p. 427.

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may he destroy you in his anger, you, and your family, and your effects; may the sword and death, fear and inquietude, pursue you on all sides; may the earth swallow you up like Dathan and Abiram; may all the sins of your parents, and all the maledictions contained in the law of Moses fall on your head." To this dreadful imprecation the miserable objects of persecution were compelled to answer three times, "So be it."*

A. D. 1238. The most signal calamity which the Jews suffered during the reign of St. Lewis was a persecution raised against them by the Parisians, on account, as was pretended, of their sacrificing some christian children on good Friday, and of using their blood at the solemnity of the passover. For this imputed act of murder and impiety, they were cruelly slaughtered in the metropolis. The persecution was also extended to Brie, Toraine, Anjou, Poitou, and Maine; in which places upwards of two thousand five hundred Jews, who refused to embrace christianity, were put to death by the most cruel tortures. Their sufferings would probably have been prolonged had not pope Gregory IX. interposed, and wrote to St. Lewis, requesting him to allow them liberty of conscience.

* Gifford's History of France, Vol. I. p. 436, 437—450.

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During the king's imprisonment in the holy land* a crusade was formed in his kingdom of simple shepherds, whose professed object was to march thither and release him. They grounded their chimerical design upon revelations, and pretended they had the gift of working miracles. The enthusiastick fury spread till their army amounted to an hundred thousand men, who marched to Bourges, plundered the Jews, and seized all their books in order to commit them to the flames. At length, however, they were subdued, and many of them put to death.†

The following year a conference was held in the presence of Blanche, the queen regent during St. Lewis's absence, between rabbi Jechiel a learned cabbalist, and Nicolas Donim a celebrated Jewish convert. The French authors assert, that Jechiel, baffled and mortified by the powerful arguments of his opponent, retired in disgust to Jerusalem. While the king was under confinement in the holy land, he sent an edict to France to expel the Jews from his dominions, which was punctually executed by the queen regent.

* St. Lewis was at the head of the sixth and seventh crusade in 1248 and 1270.

† Basnage, p. 672.

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A. D. 1239. The Israelites being numerous, and great usurers in Brittany, the nobility and merchants united in a complaint against them to John le Roux, the duke. An act was passed which declared, that at the request of the bishops, abbots, barons, and vassals in Brittany, all the Jews should be forever banished from that province. By this law all their debtors were exonerated, and their effects ordered to be retained; and those who had recently killed a Jew were forbidden to be disturbed. The king of France was to be requested to expel this hated race, and confiscate their property. The duke engaged for himself and his successors, for the present and future to support this law; and, if he violated it, he authorized the bishops to excommunicate him, and confiscate his lands in their dioceses without regard to any privileges.*

1240. The celebrated council of Lyons passed also a decree enjoining all christian princes who had Jews in their dominions, under penalty of excommunication, to compel them to refund to the Crusaders all the money they had obtained by usury. This oppressed people were also prohibited from demanding any debts due to them from the Crusaders till their death or return.

* Basnage, p. 671. Gregoire, p. 243.

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The council of Vienna, held in the same century, defended the Christians against the exorbitant usury of the Jewish nation. This people, however, notwithstanding these decrees and precautions, in some provinces of France, particularly in Languedoc, were raised to the magistracy,* and in most parts of the the kingdom kept christian slaves.

Philip the bold, the successor of St. Lewis, was induced to recall the Jews in order to promote commerce, effect the circulation of money, and improve his exhausted finances. They became powerful and affluent under the reign of this prince. In 1290, Edward, king of England, banished this people from Gascony, and his other dominions in France.† A. D. 1275.

The example of the English monarch was followed by Philip the fair, who published an edict by which all the Jews who refused to profess christianity were expelled the kingdom, never to return upon pain of death. It is allowed, that this unhappy people were sacrificed to the king's extreme avarice,‡ for he seized upon all their wealth, and only allowed 1300.

* The city of Montpelier in particular had been frequently in danger of seeing a Jew at the head of the magistracy; upon which account, William IV. lord of it, found himself obliged to forbid it by his last will, as his grandfather had done about fifty years before.—*Modern Univer. Hist. Vol. XIII. p.* 317.

† Hume's History of England. ‡ Basnage, p. 674.

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them money to defray their expenses to the frontiers. Many perished by the way with fatigue and want, and those who survived retired into Germany. Hence the Jews of that country supposed themselves of French extraction. Among those who escaped exile by receiving baptism many relapsed and returned to Judaism.

The conversion of the celebrated Nicolas de Lyra, however, appears to have been sincere. He wrote a learned treatise against his nation, and spent the remainder of his life in the explanation of the scriptures. Most of the proselytes think themselves obliged to give a testimony of their faith by writing against their deserted brethren; but he is said to have adduced more cogent arguments against them than any Jewish convert before him. He studied some time in the university of Paris, and then entered into the Franciscan order. He died at his convent at Verneuil in the year 1340.*

A. D. 1314. The same avarice which caused Philip to expel the Jews from France induced Lewis X. the succeeding monarch, to recall them. He expected by this measure to recruit his finances, and thus be enabled to reduce the Flemmings to subjection. The condition of

* Modern Univer. Hist. Vol. XIII. p. 321.

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their return was paying a very heavy tax; and the time of their remaining in the kingdom limited to twelve years. During this period they were at liberty to engage in trade, or support themselves by labour. They were allowed to collect their old debts, two thirds of which the king claimed for himself. They were also permitted to purchase synagogues, burying-places, and their books, except the Talmud. But they were now obliged, as before, to wear a particular mark of distinction. They were prohibited from lending money on usurious interest, written obligation, or, in short, any thing but pledges. They were likewise forbidden to dispute on religion either in publick or private.*

In the reign of Philip V. surnamed the tall, A. D. 1320. the shepherds and other inhabitants of the country left their flocks and farms, and asserted, that they were going to Jerusalem for the relief of the holy land. With no other weapons than a pilgrim's staff they marched in great bodies, which were increased by the junction of the populace, which they met on their way. Their leaders were two profligate priests, who pretended to work miracles, and thus imposed upon the credulity of the people. They rav-

* Basnage, p. 674.

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aged several of the southern provinces, broke open the prison doors, and enlisted all the criminals they found into their society. By these means they made themselves masters of several cities, and committed the vilest outrages and cruelties; but more particularly against the Jews. This miserable race, left to the choice of death or baptism, collected their most valuable effects, and fled before this tumultuous rabble. A considerable number of them having taken refuge in the royal castle of Verdun, in the diocese of Toulouse, were there besieged by the shepherds. They defended themselves with vigour and desperation; and, finding their arms fail, began to throw their children over the walls in hopes to excite the compassion of their enemies; but in vain.*

The shepherds set fire to the fortress, and expected to satiate their rage with the slaughter of the besieged. But the Jews perceiving there was no means of escape, to avoid falling into the hands of the enemy, requested one of their brethren, a young man of great strength, to put them all to death. The wretch accepted the fatal commission, and after he had massacred five hundred he presented himself to the besiegers with a few children, whose lives he

* Basnage, p. 675. Gifford.

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had spared, and demanded baptism. His request, however, was rejected, and he received the punishment due to his barbarity. At length a great number of the shepherds were apprehended and executed at different places, particularly at Toulouse, where they had massacred all the Jews in the city.*

This miserable people were ten years after involved in another calamity, pretended to have been occasioned by their having suffered themselves to be bribed by the Saracen king of Grenada, to procure the poisoning of all the rivers, wells, and reservoirs of water. A leper having deposed, that he was hired by a certain rich Jew to effect this purpose, the people in several provinces, without waiting for the necessary formality, attacked the Jews, and put them to the most cruel death. Some, driven to despair, perished by suicide. At Paris, however, none but those who were supposed guilty were destroyed. The rich were imprisoned till they would discover their treasures, the greatest part of which the king seized for his own use, and expelled this devoted race from his dominions.† A. D. 1330.

After the Jews were banished the kingdom by Philip the tall, they took refuge in Lom-

* Basnage, p. 664. Gifford, Vol. I. p. 539.

† Basnage, p. 675. Gifford, Vol. I. p. 139, Vol. II. p. 206.

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bardy, and gave to the foreign merchants bills of exchange, drawn upon those to whom they entrusted their effects at parting, and those bills were accepted. Thus "commerce was seen to arise from the bosom of vexation and despair."* It was reserved for an oppressed people to invent a method, by which merchants in regions the most remote from each other could procure the value of their commodities without the inconvenience of transporting gold or silver. In this way the Jews often eluded the violence and rapacity of their enemies; the richest among them frequently having none but invisible effects, which they could convey imperceptibly wherever they pleased. Thus they accelerated their return; for though the princes were willing to banish their persons, they wished to retain their wealth.†

A. D. 1360. In the reign of John II. the Jews endeavoured to procure their recall. During the king's captivity‡ they had made several proposals

* Montesquieu's Works, Vol. II. p. 60

† French Encyclo. Gregoire's Observations nouvelles sur les Juifs.

‡ King John was taken prisoner in 1356 by the celebrated prince of Wales, surnamed the black prince, son of Edward III. of England The French king had agreed to pay three millions of gold crowns for his ransom. The first payment was to be 600,000 crowns; and as France could not then furnish the money, they were obliged to recall the Jews, and sell them the liberty of trading in France.—*Anderson, Vol. I. p. 452.*

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to the regent, who evinced a disposition to grant them a favour which they offered to purchase at a very high price. Soon after his release John published a declaration, by which he permitted them to return and remain in the kingdom twenty years. Besides the sum which they advanced for this privilege, every master of a family paid twelve florins of gold on his entrance into, and six florins yearly for the liberty of residing in France. A general poll tax was also levied upon them of one florin per head. The king strictly prohibited their exorbitant usury, and permitted them only to take moderate interest.*

During the reign of Charles VI. the Jews were accused of murdering a new convert, and other crimes,† for which some were executed, others scourged, and fines levied upon the synagogues. These severities induced many to assume the mask of christianity.‡ The people, however, in 1380, insisted upon their expulsion, and assembled as it is said at the instigation of certain noblemen, who had borrowed large sums of this persecuted race, who, though generally considered as the outcasts of

* Gifford, Vol. II. p. 269. Basnage, p. 676.

† Charles VI. during his reign, becoming deranged in his intellect, it was suspected that the Jews deprived him of his reason.—*Gregoire, p.* 22.

‡ Basnage, p. 676.

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society, exerted their industry with success in the acquisition of wealth. The houses of the publick receivers, most of whom were Jews in Lombardy, were broke open; the chests in which the money was deposited were seized, and their contents emptied into the streets; while the registers, bonds, and all other securities for money lent, were destroyed. In one street alone thirty houses were pillaged, and all the furniture, clothes, plate, and jewels, became the prey of the populace. The Jews endeavoured to preserve their lives by flight, but most of them were intercepted and massacred; while the few who escaped, took refuge in the dungeons of the Chatelet. The women in despair attempted to follow their husbands with their children in their arms; but the mob forced their children from them, and carried them to be baptized.*

The government was too weak to inflict on the insurgents the punishment which their crimes deserved. The Jews, however, were reestablished in their habitations; and an order was issued by the council for every one to restore, under pain of death, whatever he had taken from them; but the order was treated with contempt. These miserable objects of oppression, after being despoiled of their prop-

* Gifford, Vol. II. p. 269.

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erly, were exposed to prosecutions from those who had left pledges in their hands; but an ordinance was passed to exempt them from the consequences on taking an oath, that the property which was the object of the action had been taken from them during the tumult.*

In the reign of Charles VI. a council which was held on the 17th. of September, passed an act for the final expulsion of the Jews from France. The provost was ordered to superintend the execution of the edict, and take an inventory of all the effects which could be found in their houses at the time of their departure. They were obliged to leave the kingdom in November; and from this last exile they begin the date of their years. The greater part of this persecuted people retired into Germany. In the city of Metz in Lorraine they preserved their ancient privileges,† the city being at the time of their expulsion a free town in the imperial territories. After it was annexed to the French dominions, the king of France continued to tolerate the Jews who

A. D. 1394.

* Gifford, Vol. II. p. 269.

† The Jews were established at Metz as early as the year 888, since at that epoch Gombert the dean brought some complaints against them. Sigebert de Gemblours taught in this city in the twelfth century with such success, that they eagerly resorted to hear his instructions.—*Gregoire on the Reformation of the Jews, page* 283.

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were settled there, and for a long period it was the only place in the kingdom where they enjoyed a privileged abode.*

Respecting the repeated accusations brought against the Jews, of crucifying christian children, poisoning the rivers, &c. a late author observes, "in the dark periods of the middle ages† the Jews, punished but in the most dreadful manner for real crimes, suffered oftener for crimes merely chimerical. The relations of their sacrificing christian children are given by christian historians. But even granting, that rage, madness, or a desire of revenge may have induced some fanaticks to commit these excesses, are we to consider the whole nation as culpable?

"The poisoning of fountains by bundles of herbs, or noxious mixtures, forms an accusation much more absurd; for in order to commit crimes, people must be actuated by some motives, and the hopes of success. But what success could the Jews expect in poisoning the

* Basnage, p. 676. Gifford, Vol. II. p. 344.

† The middle age, as it is called, is considered as terminating at the taking of Constantinople in the fifteenth century. Its commencement is not so well fixed by historians, some carrying it back even to the reign of Constantine, and some only to the division of the empire under Theodosius. The middle age contains a period of about one thousand years. The term dark age is sometimes used to express the ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries, which were the most barbarous portions of this dark period.

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springs, which were constantly renewed, and from which they themselves daily drew water. Ask the physicians, if, at a time when chemistry was only in its infancy, a poison was known sufficiently active to produce that effect. Can we allow ourselves to be persuaded, that the Jews, who were so much interested in living upon good terms with other nations, should attempt crimes, the execution of which was evidently impossible; and which they must naturally expect would provoke new persecutions? But though all the crimes imputed to the Jews should be true, when we examine them thoroughly, they will appear less culpable than the nations by whom they have been compelled to commit them."*

It ought, however, to be remembered, that the cruelty of professed christians to the Jews in the dark ages is no argument against the truth of that sacred religion, the genuine spirit of which breathes "peace on earth and good will to men." This spirit was exemplified in the primitive christians, the apostles, and martyrs, and more especially in their head and patron Jesus Christ, who, while he expired, prayed for

* Gregoire on the Reformation of the Jews, p. 26.

According to Basnage most of these accusations against the Jews were the reports of their inveterate enemies, who continually sought their destruction, p. 644.

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his most inveterate persecutors, saying, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do."*

CHAP. XVIII.

The Jews in Spain are persecuted by the bishop of Toledo. They are massacred by the Crusaders. Raymond de Penneforte attempts to convert them. They are favoured by Alphonso X. and James I. king of Arragon. They are deluded by an impostor, who predicted the appearance of the Messiah. Irruption of the shepherds. The pestilence spreads from their army. The Jews are accused of poisoning the rivers. They are favoured by Alphonso XI. Their enemies conspire to destroy them. Fresh insurrections at Toledo. Many Jews perish by suicide. Of the persecutions they suffered at Castile and Arragon in the latter part of the fourteenth century. Pope Benedict appoints a conference between them and the Christians. A large number of Jews profess christianity. Of the pretended conversions by Vincent Ferrier. Cruelty of the inquisition. They are banished from Spain. Terrible distress of the refugees. They are received into, and soon after expelled from Portugal.

A. D. 1209. THE sufferings of the Jews in Spain, were equally severe with those of their brethren in England and France. At the commencement of the thirteenth century, the bishop of Toledo perceiving them to increase in number and wealth excited the populace against them, and, putting himself at their head, entered and plundered their houses and synagogues. He endeavoured to vindicate his conduct by accusing the Hebrews of having betrayed the city

* See letters of certain Jews to Voltaire.

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when it was besieged by the Moors; but the silence of impartial historians exculpated them from the charge.*

The Crusaders, who soon after assembled near Toledo, completed the work of destruction which the bigoted prelate had begun. They prescribed no limits to their cruelty, but made such havock and carnage among this miserable people, that Abravanel, a celebrated Jewish writer, considered this as one of the most severe and bloody persecutions which his nation ever suffered, and that it caused a greater number to abandon Spain than Moses conducted out of Egypt. The Spanish nobles endeavoured to interpose their authority, and to suppress these cruelties. But Ferdinand, who then possessed the sovereign power, and wished to ingratiate himself with the populace by the extirpation of the Albigenses and other sects, encouraged and promoted the persecution.† A. D. 1212.

During the reign of James I. king of Aragon, who was distinguished for his zeal for christianity, great efforts were made to convert the Jews. Raymond de Penneforte,‡ general of the Dominicans, confessor to the king and minister to the pope, used energetic measures 1250.

* Basnage, p. 659. † Ibid, p 670.

‡ Raymond was canonized by pope Clement VIII.

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to effect this purpose. He had already, by his reputation and address, suppressed the violence of the populace against this unhappy people; and persuaded the king that mildness and instruction were the most effectual means to induce them to embrace christianity. Agreeably to his benevolent plan, several of the Dominican friars were chosen to learn the Hebrew and Arabic languages, and directed to apply themselves assiduously to the study of the scriptures, that they might be enabled to dispute with the Jewish rabbis in order to convince them of their errours. The attempts made to convert the Jews were, however, in general unsuccessful; though they highly esteemed Raymond for his singular humanity and moderation.*

A. D. 1255. Alphonso X. king of Castile, and a celebrated astronomer, encouraged and promoted learned men of all religious denominations. By his order Judah de Toledo translated and

* Raymond Martin, another Dominican, wrote a treatise against the Jews, called "Pugio Fidei," or the "Poignard of Faith." This work is considered as a learned and powerful defence of the christian religion against the arguments of the Jews. Another monk named Paul, of the same order, held a conference in the palace of the king with Moses Nachmanides, a famous cabbalistical Jew. Both sides claimed the victory. Paul obtained an edict from king Ferdinand, enjoining the Jews to open their houses and synagogues to him, and to furnish them with all their Hebrew books whenever he come to dispute with them.—*Basnage, p.* 669.

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improved the astronomical works of Avicenna, a learned Arabic writer. Isaac, the son of Cid, and other rabbis assisted him in compiling certain astronomical tables, which bear the name of the king, and do honour to his memory.*

Alphonso rewarded them with royal munificence, and became so generous a patron to the nation, that the jealousy of the Zealots was excited, and they formed new plots and accusations against them. Three villains of the city of Orsana, in Andalusia, threw the dead body of a man into the house of a Jew, and accused him of the murder. This improbable assertion gained credit, and awakened the popular fury and hatred against them. A great number of Jews were inhumanly put to death, and others fled for refuge to the houses of their christian acquaintance. The inhabitants of Palma also rose, and destroyed many of this unhappy people. Upon this they sent a deputation to court to obtain the suppression of a massacre which was so likely to prove general. Their enemies also sent deputies on their part, who arrived first at court, and accused them. Joseph, however, who was at the head of the deputation, and chief of the Jewish council,

* Modern Universal History, Vol. XIII. p. 304.

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was so eloquent in pleading his cause before the Spanish monarch, that his countrymen were acquitted of the pretended murder.*

Many learned men appeared among the Jews during the time that they enjoyed the favour of the king Alphonso. In this number, Meir Mithridos, a native of Toledo, was eminently distinguished. He was the author of a famous cabbalistical work, and a volume of letters against Nachmanides and Maimonides, and educated many pupils who became the boast of the Jewish nation.

Nor was it only at the court of Castile that learned rabbis appeared and were respected. James I. king of Arragon, was so far from adopting the prejudices against them, that he applied to them for moral and religious instruction.† For, though the Jewish people were hated and despised by the populace, and by the ignorant among the clergy, they were at this time admired and encouraged by the great and learned.

1258. Their happiness was, however, soon after disturbed by a celebrated impostor named Zechariah, who formed the design of deceiving

* Basnage, p. 663.

† The king, it is said, expressed an approbation of some parts of the Jewish prayer books. The clergy in this age applied themselves rather to controversy than devotion.—*Modern Universal History, Vol. XIII. p. 307.*

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all the synagogues in Spain. He pretended, that by his knowledge of the prophecies he had discovered the exact time of the appearance of the Messiah, which he predicted to be just at hand. This impostor even foretold the very day on which this mighty deliverer was to appear, who should gather together his elect people, subdue their enemies, and replace them in their ancient inheritance. Deceived by this prophecy and expectation of the Messiah, the Jews prepared themselves for the event by fasting and prayer, and at the time appointed repaired to the synagogues clothed in white. But discovering the imposture, they became ashamed of their blind credulity, and were exposed to the insults and derision of their enemies.*

But the most terrible calamity which they suffered during this period was by the body of shepherds who had committed such fatal ravages in France. Having become numerous and powerful they entered Spain, and carried fire and sword into several provinces. The Jews, in particular, were the victims of their rapacity and cruelty. Many preserved their lives by surrendering their property and renouncing their religion. Those who could A. D. 1320.

* Basnage, p. 664.

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not be induced to make these sacrifices were instantly and inhumanly put to death.*

The pestilence which arose in the army of the shepherds, and extended through the neighbouring countries, was productive of new evils to this unhappy people. The desolation occasioned by this destructive scourge, was attributed to their malice against the Christians. They were accused of having bribed the peasants of Mesura to poison the rivers, and of having furnished them with poison for that purpose. This absurd allegation† gained credit, and caused great numbers of Jews to be imprisoned and tried. After a long confinement, however, they acquitted themselves of the crimes laid to their charge. But the king, who was unwilling to confess and condemn the injustice of his conduct, pretended that he detained them in prison in order to effect their conversion; and caused fifteen thousand who refused to receive baptism to be put to a cruel death.

A. D. 1333. Alphonso XI. king of Castile, was the friend and protector of the Jews, being principally directed in his affairs by Joseph, one of the nation, whom he had appointed intendant of his finan-

* Basnage, p. 664.

† The inventors of this palpable calumny were those who owed money to the Jews, and who wished to be delivered from their embarrassment without paying it.—*Gregoire, p. 28.*

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ces. This monarch was, however, prevailed upon by his mutinous and discontented subjects to pass a decree against them, on account of a pretended indignity offered to the sacrament by a Jewish boy. The clamour of the populace was so violent, that a council was convened to deliberate whether they should be put to death or banished. The latter measure being preferred, they were commanded to abandon the kingdom in three months. Happily for them, the prince royal obtained a revisal of the process, by which it appeared, that a young christian had inadvertently committed the supposed crime. On this deposition, the king recalled his edict. The acquittal of the Jews highly mortified and exasperated their enemies, who asserted, that the christian had been bribed to give an evidence in their favour. In another city many of the nation were put to death for the pretended offence.*

Soon after, a fresh insurrection against the Jews broke out in Toledo, and their terrour and desperation on this occasion baffles all description. One of them, perceiving the Zealots breaking into the house in order to massacre all they found, in a phrenzy of rage and despair killed his relations who had taken refuge A. D. 1349.

* Basnage, p. 665.

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with him, and then destroyed himself in order to avoid falling into the hands of his enemies.*

A. D. 1396. In the reign of Henry III. of Castile, Martin, archdeacon of Astigi, by vehemently preaching against the Jews through the streets of Seville and Cordova, exasperated the populace to such a degree, that they massacred them in both places. The persecution spread to Toledo, Valencia, and Barcelona, where some were plundered, others murdered, while the most artful professed christianity in order to escape such acts of violence. The populous synagogues of Seville and Cordova became almost deserted. These wretched fugitives, who had fled to Andalusia and other provinces, were put to death by the inhabitants. King John, the son and successor of Henry, treated the Jews with equal cruelty. During his reign many perished by being deprived of the necessaries of life, and those who survived were compelled to wear a disgraceful mark of distinction.†

The situation of the Jews in Arragon was not much more eligible than that of their brethren in Castile. That kingdom was involved in civil and intestine wars, which could only be supported by large imposts. The heaviest taxes were levied upon a people who

* Basnage, p. 667. † Ibid.

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had been so long the miserable objects of oppression. But though they were exposed to continual vexations and persecutions, several learned men during the fourteenth century appeared among those in Spain. In particular two physicians* of the Castilian king acquired great celebrity. One of these famous men, named Meir Algudes, was chief of all the synagogues in Spain. He translated Aristotle's Ethics, and flourished till the year 1405.†

At the commencement of the fifteenth century, the antipope Benedict XIII. who was then in Arragon, distinguished himself by his zeal for the conversion of the Jews. To effect this purpose, he summoned the most celebrated rabbis in Spain to attend a conference which he appointed for religious discussions between them and the Christians. Jerome de Sancta Fide, who had deserted the synagogue and embraced christianity, persuaded the pope to take this step, by assuring him that he could convince his countrymen by passages out of the Talmud, that Jesus Christ was the Messiah. This convert was not only the chief promoter, but the principal conductor of the dispute. Rabbi Vidal was chosen to defend the Jewish A. D. 1412.

* The learned Dr. Friend in his History of Medicine asserts, that the Jews were the princes of that science in Europe during the middle ages.—*Gregoire, p.* 218.

† Basnage, p. 680.

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religion. The Jews at this time expressed unusual respect for the pope, who entertained them with politeness, and defrayed their expenses.* But they treated Jerome with great asperity, their minds being exceedingly embittered against him, both for deserting the synagogue, and involving them in a dispute from which they apprehended fatal consequences.†

The tenour and result of this famous conference is variously related by Christian and Jewish historians. The latter, however, confess that they bribed several bishops to persuade Benedict to break off the dispute, from an apprehension that it would exasperate their enemies against them. But the pope insisted upon Jerome's performing his engagement; and four or five thousand Jews were converted upon reading his relation of the conference, which he presented to this pontiff. The high celebrity of this performance induced Joseph Albo,‡ a Spanish rabbi to compile his articles

* They, it is said, even carried their impious flattery so far as to apply to him the words of David's petition to God; "shew us thy mercy, O Lord, and grant us thy salvation."—*Basnage, p.* 680.

† Basnage, p. 680. Modern Univer. Hist. Vol. XIII.

‡ This rabbi, finding the arguments which were adduced to prove that the Messiah was come made a great impression upon the Jews, maintained, that a belief of his coming was not an essential article of faith, and wished to have it expunged from the creed of Maimonides.—*Basnage, p.* 344.

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of faith in order to confirm the wavering minds of his brethren. He pretended, that a belief of the future coming of the Messiah was not necessary to salvation; and censured Maimonides without naming him, for having made this an essential part of his creed. He reduced the fundamental dogmas of the Jewish faith to three, viz. the existence of God, the law of Moses, and future rewards and punishments.*

The following year Benedict XIII. published his constitution against the Talmud, and the usury of the Jews. But, as he was deposed soon after, all his ordinances were revoked; and it does not appear, that his plans were followed by Martin of Florence his successor. A. D. 1413.

Vincent Ferrier, who has been canonized for his miracles and zeal for converting the Jews, appeared at this time. The Christians compute, that the number whom he induced to abandon their religion amounted to twenty five thousand. According to the Jewish accounts still more deserted the synagogues. But whatever was their number, it appears that the greatest part of them renounced their former religion, merely to avoid severe and cruel treatment. They secretly circumcised 1413.

* Addison's Present State of the Jews, p. 17.

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their children, observed the passover, and neglected none of the Jewish rites and ceremonies.*

The dissimulation of the pretended converts did not long pass unnoticed by the clergy, who acquainted Ferdinand the Spanish monarch, and the pope Sixtus IV. with their conduct. Exasperated at the affront offered to the christian religion, the tribunal of the inquisition† was directed to pay close attention to the behaviour of these delinquents; and all christian princes were exhorted to assist in bringing them to condign punishment. This decree, which was published in most parts of Spain,

* Basnage, p. 689. Modern Universal Hist. Vol. XIII. p. 347.

A small number of Jews were, however, esteemed sincere converts; among whom Solomon, the son of Levi, was included. Having read a work of Thomas Aquinas, he embraced christianity, and took the name of Paul of Burges. Soon after his baptism he was raised to the bishoprick of that city, which was his native place, and afterwards to the patriarchate of Aquileia. He left a son, who succeeded him in the bishoprick, and wrote a history of Spain.—*Basnage*, p. 690.

† The court of the inquisition was introduced into Spain in the fifteenth century by Ferdinand and Isabella; and was principally intended to prevent the relapse of the Jews and Moors, who had been, or pretended to be converted to the faith of the church of Rome. Torquemade, a Dominican, confessor to queen Isabella, pretended that the dissimulation of the Jews would greatly injure the cause of religion. The queen listened with respectful deference to her confessor, and at length gained over the king to consent to the establishment of this barbarous tribunal. Its jurisdiction extended over all who in their practice or opinions differed from the established church.—*Watson's History of the reign of Philip. II. Vol. II. p.* 134, 135.

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filled the Jews with such consternation, that seventeen thousand immediately returned to the church, and submitted themselves to whatever censure or penance should be inflicted. Two thousand of this miserable people, part of whom confessed that Jesus Christ was the true Messiah, were put to death. Many were sentenced to a long imprisonment, and, after regaining their liberty, were ordered to wear two red crosses on their upper garments, in acknowledgement that they had deserved the flames. Nor were the sacred repositories of the dead spared; human bodies were disinterred and burned; their property was confiscated, and their children were declared incapable of succeeding to the possessions of their parents. Notwithstanding the watchfulness of the inquisition, many found means to emigrate; others were more careful to conceal their dissimulation; and some endeavoured to be better instructed previously to their professing christianity.*

The populace still continued to oppress and insult this unhappy people, and attributed all the publick calamities to the obstinacy of the recusant, or the hypocrisy of the conforming Jews. At this time an insurrection took place A. D. 1445.

* Basnage, p. 691. Modern Univer. Hist.

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at Toledo, on account of a pretended infringement on their privileges. The resentment of a mutinous people was principally levelled against the Jews, whose houses they plundered, and murdered all who opposed them. After the tumult subsided, laws were enacted which excluded the new converts from all offices of trust and honour.

The Spanish clergy, however, took them under their protection. The dean of the cathedral church in the city particularly exerted all his eloquence in their favour, and endeavoured to interest the feelings of the people by representing, that many illustrious families, who had intermarried* with the converted Jews, would be deprived of all their employments by the execution of these laws. All his efforts would have proved ineffectual, had not pope Nicolas I. published a bull, by which he excommunicated all who were for excluding the Jewish or Pagan proselytes from any civil or ecclesiastical preferment. This decree of the sovereign pontiff was so displeasing to the Spanish nation, that he was obliged to issue a second bull to confirm it; and Mariana is al-

* A number of the Grandees who had nothing left but their titles had married into Jewish families in order to repair the losses they had sustained by their prodigality.—*Voltaire's Works, Vol. III. p. 33.*

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most the only Spanish writer who has given it a place in his history.*

Soon after Ferdinand and Isabella had completed their reduction of the Moors, they issued an edict, commanding the Jews either to embrace christianity, or quit the kingdom in four months. The people were at the same time prohibited, under the severest penalties, from affording provisions or any other assistance to those who should be found in Spain after this period. Their attachment to the law of Moses was superiour to every other consideration; and the Spanish historians affirm, that seventy thousand families, or eight hundred thousand persons, abandoned the kingdom pursuant to this decree. The Jewish writers make the number two hundred thousand; which, reckoning only five to each family, must have amounted to a million of souls.† A. D. 1492.

The reputation, which the celebrated rabbi Isaac Abravanel enjoyed at court, could not prevent his being included among the exiles.‡ He was born at Lisbon, 1437, of an ancient family, who boasted a lineal descent from king

* Mariana's History of Spain. Basnage, p. 691. † Ibid.

‡ Rabbi Isaac Karo was another learned exile. He retired first to Portugal, and thence to Jerusalem. He lived a perfect recluse in this city, and devoted himself to study. He composed a Commentary on the Pentateuch, partly cabbalistical and partly literal.—*Modern Universal History.*

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David.* His parents took great care of his education, and, as he possessed distinguished abilities, he made a rapid progress in the sciences, especially sacred literature. But his ambition to figure at court induced him to turn his chief attention to politics, finance, and commerce.

During the reign of Alphonso V. king of Portugal, he was chosen one of his privy council, and filled his station with dignity and splendour till the death of this monarch. But being discarded in the reign of his successor, who hated the Jews, he fled to Castile. He was graciously received by Ferdinand and Isabella, and advanced to preferments, which he enjoyed until his countrymen were expelled from Spain. He exerted himself to the utmost to save himself and his nation from this fatal stroke. But, finding all his efforts useless, he embarked for Naples, and arrived there with his family in 1493. Being educated a courtier, he ingratiated himself into the favour of Ferdinand, king of Naples; and both that sovereign

* He founded his pretensions on the testimony of Isaac Aben Geath, who says in one of his commentaries on the scriptures, that at the time of the destruction of the first temple, two families of the race of David went into Spain; one of whom settled at Lucena, the other at Seville; and that from the latter Abravanel was descended. After the example of his father he assumed the title of Don, the usual custom among the nobles of Spain.—*Boissi Dissertations Critiques pour servir a l'histoire des Juifs.*

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and Alphonso his successor protected and employed him. He died at Venice, 1508, in the seventy first year of his age, and was interred at Padua. Several of the Venetian nobles and all the Jews attended his funeral. He published many learned works,* particularly a commentary on Exodus, Deuteronomy, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and other books of the Old Testament.†

The sufferings of the Jewish emigrants who embarked for other countries were inexpressible and almost inconceivable. Some of the vessels took fire, and the miserable objects of oppression perished in the flames. Others were so heavily laden that they sunk, and many were drowned. Great numbers were shipwrecked on foreign coasts, and perished with cold and hunger. One of the Spanish pilots formed the resolution of murdering all the Jews in his vessel, in order, as he pretended, to revenge the death of Christ, whom their ancestors had crucified. They represented to him that Christ, "who died for the redemption of

* Basnage, p. 692. De Rossie's Hebrew Biography.

† He applied himself to study with indefatigable ardour, and was held in such high estimation among the Jews, that some did not hesitate to pronounce him superiour to Maimonides. They agree, that to a mind clear and penetrating he added a lively and fertile imagination, which was exhibited in his easy and copious elocution.—*Dissertations Critiques, &c.*

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mankind, did not desire the death but the salvation of the sinner." The sailor in consequence of this pathetick remonstrance gave up the design of murdering them; but caused them to be stripped naked, and set down on the next shore, where part of them perished with hunger; others were destroyed by lions who came out of a neighbouring cavern. The remainder were saved by the humanity of a master of a vessel, who took them in upon seeing their miserable condition.*

The pestilence also destroyed many of these unfortunate exiles; and, to complete their calamities, those who reached the city of Fez in Africa were refused admittance by the merciless inhabitants, and died for want of the necessaries of life. When those who sailed for Italy arrived at Genoa, they found the city afflicted by a famine, which had greatly raised the price of provisions. The inhabitants, seeing them macerated by sufferings, and destitute of money to purchase food, met them with the cross in one hand and bread in the other; and refused to give sustenance to any who would not previously consent to adore the cross. Many of this wretched people, who had the courage to abandon their country and

* Basnage, p. 693.

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riches for their religion, were unable to resist this second temptation.*

The tyrannical manner, in which the bigotry and avarice of king Ferdinand had induced him to treat the Jews, was highly condemned by all judicious Christians. This unhappy race, upon the first notice of their intended expulsion, had found means to elude the vigilant rapacity of the monarch, and convey the richest of their effects into the countries where they intended to retire. In consequence of which, the wealth acquired by their expulsion was not so considerable as the king expected. The Spanish nobility complained that their cities and towns were disinhabited. The senate of Venice and the parliament of Paris expressed their astonishment at the banishment of a nation, whose address in pecuniary negotiations was so useful to the publick.† Though pope Alexander VI. dignified the Spanish monarch with the title of *Catholick*, yet he readily received the exiles into his own dominions, and treated them with great kindness and humanity.‡

* Basnage, p. 692.

† The expulsion of the Jews gave a violent check to the commerce of Spain, which was almost entirely in their hands.—*Bigland's View of the World.*

‡ Basnage, p. 693.

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Many of the Jews sought a nearer asylum in Portugal. John II.* the sovereign of that kingdom, had formerly sent some of this nation† to make discoveries on the coasts of the Red Sea; and they brought him exact and faithful accounts. They had assisted the Portuguese adventurers in the discovery of the East Indies. Notwithstanding these important services, the king consented to receive them only on condition that each one should pay him eight golden ducats, and quit his dominions at a limited time, or forfeit his liberty. On his part he engaged, when the time fixed for their departure arrived, to furnish vessels to transport them to any place where they chose to retire. The king was desirous of fulfilling his engagement; but his orders were disregarded, and the fugitives, who were about to leave Portugal, were treated in such a barbarous manner by the seamen, that many chose to remain in the kingdom and be sold as slaves, rather than expose themselves to the perils and hardships of a new voyage.‡ . . . . . .

Emanuel, his successor, appeared at first to commiserate their sufferings, and restored to

* In the reign of John I. the Jews had their synagogues and rabbis in Portugal.

† Murphy's Travels in Portugal, p. 223.

‡ Basnage, p. 694. Murphy's Travels in Portugal, p. 224.

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them their liberty. Their peace, however, was of short duration; and the king reluctantly sacrificed them to an alliance which he contracted with the daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella. The queen having declared, that "she would not acknowledge a son-in-law who permitted the enemies of God to remain in his dominions," he issued an edict which expelled them from Portugal, and fixed a day on which those who remained should be deprived of their liberty.

When the appointed time arrived, the king was greatly affected with the idea of expelling such multitudes of people; and resolved at least to effect the conversion of their children. He had engaged that ships should be provided for their emigration at three principal ports; but he issued a proclamation forbidding them to embark any where but at Lisbon. When they arrived at this city, he ordered all the children under fourteen years of age to be forcibly taken from their parents, in order to be educated in the christian faith. The execution of this barbarous command was attended with the most affecting circumstances. Many of the wretched parents in a phrenzy of rage and despair, first killed their children, and then destroyed themselves. The king had invented so many delays to retard the departure of these unfortunate exiles, that many re-

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mained in the kingdom, and were sold as slaves. Overwhelmed with these complicated afflictions, at length they consented to assume the mask of christianity, and recovered their liberty and children. The sincerity of these pretended converts was, however, greatly suspected, and the least discovery of their predilection for the Mosaic religion exposed them to the cruelties of the merciless inquisition.*

CHAP. XIX.

The Jews in Germany are accused of various crimes. They endeavour to hinder the conversion of a young man of their nation at Frankfort. Part of the city is burned, and a number of Jews destroyed. Accusation against those of Haguenau. They are massacred at Bavaria and Bern. Of several learned rabbis. The Jews flourish at Lithuania in the thirteenth century. Decrees enacted against them in the council of Vienna. A regulation made at Augsburg respecting the oaths to be administered to them. Disputes between the Rabbinists and Caraites. Rhind Fleish excites the people in various parts of Germany to massacre the Jews. They are protected by the bishop of Spires. They are murdered by the Flagellants. Persecution against them on pretence of their poisoning the rivers. Cruelties practised against those of Bohemia. They are accused again of poisoning the rivers, and banished the empire. They are persecuted in various parts during the thirteenth century.

A. D. 1222. THE Jews have been more frequently accused of enormous crimes in Germany than in any other part of Europe. When the Persians and Tartars made incursions into this

* Murphy's Travels in Portugal, p. 695.

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country they were charged with favouring and assisting these enterprizes, in hopes of being delivered from the persecutions which they suffered from the Christians. They were, probably, more justly accused the same year of opposing the conversion of a young man of their nation at Frankfort who was desirous of receiving baptism.* The people were incensed at this opposition, and arms were seized on both sides. Several Christians lost their lives; and about one hundred and eighty Jews perished by the sword, or the fire they had kindled. One half of the city was consumed; and the most prudent among them were induced to profess christianity, to avoid being sacrificed to the resentment of the multitude.†

The Jews in Germany were frequently accused of murdering christian children at their passover. The first instance which occurs was at Haguenau in lower Alsatia, where three of them were found dead in a Jewish house. Complaint was made to the emperour Frederic II. who, not being inclined to believe A. D. 1241.

* Basnage, p. 682.

† The fervour of the Jews is singularly inclined to fanaticism; and they are highly incensed when one of their members abjures his religion. This is in consequence of a principle imputed to Maimonides, that those who abandon Judaism ought to be persecuted to hell.—*Gregoire, p.* 84.

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the report, coldly replied, "that, since the children were dead, they must be buried." This instance of his incredulity exasperated the people; but as they were unable to prove the alleged crime, the Jews, upon paying a considerable sum, obtained a favourable judgment from the emperour.*

A. D. 1286. About this time those of Munich in Bavaria suffered a severe calamity. An old woman having confessed that she sold them a child, whom they murdered, the people, without waiting the event of a trial, put to death all of this miserable race whom they could find. The town officers, after attempting in vain to suppress the tumult, advised the Jews to retire into their synagogue, which was a strong stone building. They complied; but notwithstanding great efforts were made by the duke and the officers to appease and disperse the multitude, they were all burned and destroyed in it.† An accusation of a similar nature was brought againt those of Wurtzburgh and Bern, where they were massacred in the same manner.

Notwithstanding these persecutions, the Jews in Germany boast of the learned rabbis who appeared in the thirteenth century, parti-

* Basnage, p. 683. † Ibid.

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cularly Baruc and Eliezer de Germeciman, both of whom were famous cabbalists; and the latter wrote a celebrated treatise called "The Mantle of the Lord." Meir de Rottemburgh was also distinguished for his learning, and became the judge and chief doctor of his German brethren.*

The Jews flourished in Lithuania during the thirteenth century. King Boleslaus granted them liberty of conscience and other privileges, which they preserved under his successors. Their prosperity excited the envy of the populace, who endeavoured to disturb their peace, and blast their reputation. It was observed in the council of Vienna, which was convened in 1267, that they were become so numerous and powerful that the income of the clergy was considerably diminished. It was, therefore, ordained that they should reimburse them, in proportion to what they might have considered themselves entitled, had their families been christian. The council also enacted, that they should be compelled to demolish the new and superb synagogues which they had erected, and be contented with their former places of worship. These decrees, however, proved abortive; for the German princes and nobles protected those who refused to obey; and even

* Basnage, p. 684.

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obliged their officers to afford shelter to the unhappy victims who implored their assistance. The clergy were, therefore, necessitated to pursue more violent measures, and excommunicated all who favoured and defended the Jews.*

A new regulation was made at Augsburg upon observing that they did not consider it a crime to violate their oaths. Previously to this time they had been compelled to swear by the saints, by the blessed Mary, or even by the Son of God. But, as they made no scruple to violate these oaths, they were obliged to swear by the name of God, and the law of Moses. Yet they supposed even these solemn engagements were annulled on the great day of expiation; and could, therefore, be of force for only one year. It is also said, that a number of their casuists authorize deception, equivocation, mental restriction, and hypocrisy.† According to a concession of the Talmud, it is lawful to dissemble for the sake of peace.‡

A. D. 1285. About this time the disputes between the Rabbinists§ and Caraites were conducted with great violence. Aaron Cohen, a rabbi of great learning, who was the head of the latter sect,

* Basnage, p. 684. Modern Univer. Hist. Vol. XIII. p. 337.

† Gregoire, p. 81. ‡ Modern Univer. Hist. Vol. XIII. p. 338.

§ The Rabbinists are modern Pharisees.

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wrote a treatise to expose the absurdities of the Talmud. He explained their articles of faith, and styled his work, "The Tree of Life," because he supposed a belief of their dogmas necessary in order to attain eternal salvation. Though he acknowledged a resurrection, he confined it only to the true believers of the house of Israel. But notwithstanding his attempt to lessen the attachment which the Caraites began to discover to tradition, rabbi Nissi, another famous doctor of this sect, was obliged, at the earnest request of his pupils, to explain the Misna. Even Aaron was at length induced to give an allegorical explication of several passages of scripture. But though this relaxation in the tenets of their opponents gratified the Rabbinists,* the hatred between the two sects continued with unabated violence.†

During the contest between Adolphus of Nassau and Albert of Austria, each of whom had been elected emperour, a fanatical peasant named Raind Fleisch, taking advantage of the wars which raged in Germany, commenced A. D. 1264.

* Basnage, p. 685.

† The hatred between these sects is carried so far, that the Rabbinists assert, that if a Caraite and a Christian happen to be in danger of drowning together, they ought to make a bridge of the body of the Caraite, in order to save the Christian.—*Gregoire, p.* 86.

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an itinerant preacher in the upper Palatinate, Franconia, and other provinces. He pretended that God had sent him to exterminate the Jews; and, in order to exasperate the people against them, asserted that they had stolen a consecrated host. The credulous multitude, without further inquiry, immediately seized upon those in Nuremberg, Rottemburgh, and several other towns in Franconia and Bavaria, and put them to death. Others chose rather to destroy themselves with their wives, children, and effects, than to be thrown into the flames by their enemies. Albert would gladly have suppressed this barbarous massacre; but he was afraid that Raind Fleisch, who was regarded as a messenger from God, would persuade the people to favour and join his competitor. The persecution was at length stopped, and the city of Nuremberg laid under a heavy fine, besides being half consumed by the fire which the miserable Jews had set to their houses.*

A. D. 1339. The council, which pope Clement V. convened at Vienna against the Templars, condemned the usury of the Jews, and decreed that those who favoured them should be considered as hereticks. This edict involved them in vexatious lawsuits, and other misfortunes.

* Basnage, p. 685. Modern Univer. Hist. Vol. XIII. p. 340.

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They were, however, in some measure relieved by Menicho, bishop of Spires, who forbade them to be molested on that account in his dominions; and alleged, that the law could not concern them, seeing the church does not judge those that are without. A few years after, Lewis I. king of Hungary banished them from all his dominions.*

The Flagellants, who arose in the fourteenth century, and derived their name from the cruel scourges which they inflicted upon their own persons, supposed that murdering the enemies of Christ would render their penance more acceptable.† Accordingly they plundered and burnt the Jews at Spires, Strasburg, and Thuringen. But, after committing some outrages at Frankfort, they agreed to an accommodation. A Jew named Cicogne, whose family was numerous in that city, being dissatisfied with the compromise, threw fire into the town-house, which consumed the building, and all the records preserved in it. The flames spread to the cathedral, which was reduced to A. D. 1349.

* Basnage, p. 686.

† It has been asserted, that before these fanaticks began their penance, they read their commission with an audible voice, which was comprised in a letter sent to them by the Almighty himself, and delivered to them by an angel, with express command to scourge themselves and massacre the Jews.—*Picart's Religious Ceremonies of the Jews, p.* 172.

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ashes. This crime was severely punished; for not only the incendiary, but all his brethren in Frankfort, a few excepted who retired into Bohemia, were put to death.*

In the course of the same year the Jews were accused of poisoning the rivers, wells, and reservoirs of water. They were suspected of this crime upon no other foundation, than that they had escaped the common mortality which took place in most parts of Europe. A suspicion being sufficient to condemn them, a new massacre ensued in several provinces of Germany, in which some were burned, and others cruelly slaughtered. Those of Metz, however, resolved to defend themselves; and having seized about two hundred unarmed Christians put them to death in a barbarous manner. The incensed populace collected, furiously attacked, and killed twelve thousand Jews. They next set fire to their houses, which spread and raged so vehemently, that the great bell and glass in the cathedral church were melted down. The persecution of this miserable people extended over all Germany. In the imperial cities all their houses were demolished, and castles and towers built with the materials.†

* Basnage, p. 686. † Ibid.

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Robert, the reigning count Palatine, and his ministers, endeavoured in vain to suppress the tumult and afford an asylum to an injured race, whose innocence was acknowledged by honest men. But they were opposed by some of the nobility; and the populace accused them of accepting bribes to defend the enemies of Christ. All the Jewish inhabitants of Ulm, together with their property and effects, were burned; their wretched brethren who survived in those parts were without friends, or a place of refuge, the princes not daring at so critical a time to interpose in their behalf.

At Lithuania, however, they met with more equitable treatment. Casimire the great being enamoured with a beautiful Jewess, named Esther, had, at her request, granted them several considerable privileges.*

Those Jews who had fled for refuge to Bohemia were not better treated than their brethren in Germany. Winceslaus,† the emperour and king of Bohemia, equally discharged the cities and nobility from the debts they owed to these miserable objects of persecution. The people, therefore, considering them abandoned by that prince, attacked them at Gotha, and a A. D. 1391.

* Basnage, p. 686.

† This prince, having rendered himself odious to his people by his intemperance and other vices, sought to regain their favour by his severity to the Jews.

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terrible carnage ensued. The Jews of Spires, without distinction of age or sex, were all put to death, except a few children, who were hurried to the font to be baptized. As a pretence for this cruelty, they were accused of insulting a priest as he was carrying the sacrament to a sick person. The citizens of Prague, irritated at seeing them celebrate their passover, chose that time to burn their synagogue, and those who there engaged in devotional exercises. This inhuman deed was executed without any opposition, and not one of them escaped.*

Soon after, they were again accused of poisoning the rivers and springs, and punished for this pretended crime. The persecution was not confined to Germany, but extended to Italy, Provence, and other parts. The Jewish historians assert, that the emperour was convinced of their innocence, and represented to his council, that it was impossible for them to be guilty of this offence, as the rivers and springs, which have a free and unrestrained course, cannot be contaminated by poison. But the people were so highly exasperated against this miserable race, that, in order to preserve them from more dreadful calamities, the emperour was under the necessity of issuing an edict, enjoining them to depart the country,

* Basnage, p. 687.

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or receive baptism. The Jews assert, that few at this time were induced to apostatize, or, as they expressed it, "to forsake the glory of their God."* A. D. 1400.

Great numbers of the Jews had settled in Thuringia and Misnia. But, at the commencement of the fifteenth century, the landgraves exacted vast sums for affording them an asylum. Upon their refusal to pay an enormous tax, they were arrested and imprisoned, and obliged to give up a large part of their wealth in order to regain their liberty.†

About this period, the council of Basil commanded the prelates in all the places where there were Jews, to appoint learned divines to preach to them, and obliged them, under the severest penalties, to attend the sermons. At the same time, the Christians were prohibited from having any social intercourse with them, or employing them as servants, nurses, farmers, or physicians. They were not permitted to reside in houses near any church, or in the inside of any city. This degraded people were also compelled to wear a particular habit; and condemned to lose all the sums they lent on sacred books, crosses, and the ornaments of churches.‡ 1434.

* Modern Universal Hist. Vol. XIII. p. 343. † Basnage, p. 687.

‡ Jortin's Remarks on Ecclesiastical History.

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Twenty years after, Lewis X. duke of Bavaria, banished them from his dominions, without regarding his own interest, or the remonstrances of his friends. He also confiscated all their effects, and erected publick edifices in the places where they had inhabited.*

A. D. 1492. The princes of Mecklenburgh also treated this wretched people with extreme rigour. They were accused of offering an indignity to a consecrated host, which they purchased of a priest; for this crime thirty Jews, together with the priest, were put to a cruel death. Seven years after, those of Nuremberg, who 1499. were numerous and affluent, were banished from the city. The citizens charged them with various offences, in order to palliate their severity. But the principal cause appears to have been their wealth, and the usurious practices to which they were addicted.†

Their expulsion was probably accelerated by the appearance of an impostor, named David Leimlein. Though he had not the temerity to declare himself the Messiah, he confidently affirmed, that the mighty conqueror would appear in 1500. He styled himself chief of the army of Israel, and went to Lisbon and persuaded a young convert to return to Judaism,

* Basnage, p. 729. † Ibid.

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and act in concert with him. He gave him the name of Solomon Malcho, and exhorted him to diligently read the rabbinical writings. His pupil made such a rapid progress in his studies, that the Italian Jews affirmed his sermons were dictated by some angel. Not contented with preaching, he compiled several curious treatises, which increased his reputation. Meantime David distinguished himself by his long fasting, being sometimes six days without taking any food, and thus attracted publick notice and admiration. The credulous Jews were hence induced to demolish their ovens, expecting the following year to eat unleavened bread in Jerusalem. While they were preparing for the voyage, David, perceiving that he had set too short a time for their pretended deliverance, declared, that "the sins of the nation had retarded the coming of the Messiah." This caused the infatuated people to assemble near Jerusalem and appoint a solemn fast, in order to appease the anger of God, and hasten the appearance of their long expected deliverer.*

At length, Malcho, who declared himself the precursor of the Messiah, was so imprudent as to desire an audience of Charles V.

* Basnage, p. 729.

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then at Mantua. He was admitted; but that monarch caused him to be arrested, and put to a cruel death.*

CHAP. XX.

The Jews are protected by the Roman pontiffs during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. They are numerous in Naples. They are massacred in Trani. They build a magnificent synagogue in Bologna in the fifteenth century. The Jews are persecuted by pope John III. Massacre of those in Trent. Alexander VI. favours and protects the Jews. Those refugees, who seek an asylum in Naples, are persecuted by the inquisitors. Paul III. is partial to the Jewish nation.

WHILE the other European nations oppressed and persecuted the wretched fugitives of Israel, the Roman pontiffs, with a small exception, treated them with lenity, defended them against their persecutors, and often checked the mistaken zeal of those who sought to convert them by force.† Instances of their kindness and humanity towards the Jewish nation occur in various parts of the foregoing history. As early as the seventh century they were protected by pope Gregory the great. In the eleventh, Alexander II. condemned the perse-

* Lemlein was sent prisoner to Spain, and died there a few days after his confinement. Yet such was the infatuation of the Italian Jews, that a long time elapsed before they would believe but that he was still alive in this kingdom.—*Modern Universal History, Vol. XIII. p.* 393.

† Butler's Horæ Biblicæ, p. 88.

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cuting spirit of king Ferdinand, and endeavoured to defend them against the rage of the Crusaders. At a later period, Gregory IX. a zealous promoter of the holy war, observing that the Crusaders in many places began their expedition with massacres of the Jews, not only loudly reprehended them, but took all proper methods for preventing such barbarity. He also interposed in their favour when the inhabitants of Haguenau accused them of murdering christian children. He wrote a letter to Lewis IX. to stop the persecution which was raised against them during the reign of that monarch. Two other letters of his, addressed to all Christians, pass a severe censure upon those, who, under the cloak of religion, concealed their avarice in order to harrass the Jews; and he there enjoined them to imitate the example of his predecessors, who had declared themselves their defenders. Many of the nation were indebted for their lives to his toleration, not only in his own dominions, but in England, France, and Spain. In 1247 Innocent IV. wrote to vindicate them from the crimes* which were laid to their charge; and said, that "they were more miserable under

* The edicts of so many pontiffs to destroy the effects of the calumnies against the Jews render it highly probable, that these reports were not founded on sufficient evidence.—*Note to Mosheim's History, Vol. VI. p. 220.*

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Christian princes, than their ancestors had been under Pharaoh."*

In Naples the Jewish people were become numerous and affluent, particularly in the capital and the city of Trani. The king, in order to reward them for some important services, treated them with great indulgence, and, at his death, recommended them to the States. But these, instead of allowing them the full enjoyment of their religion, endeavoured to effect their conversion. The Jews, apprehending a persecution, offered to embrace christianity upon condition of being permitted to marry into the richest and noblest families in the kingdom. To their great surprise these terms were accepted, and they were obliged to accede to their own proposal. Those, however, who could not form advantageous connexions, soon relapsed into Judaism. A monk of Trani resolved to punish them for their dissimulation; and, to effect this purpose, concealed a cross in a heap of earth, and charged a Jew of the city with the fact. Exasperated at this supposed crime, the people rose, and a massacre immediately followed. The tumult extended to Naples, where the Jews would have been put to death had not

* Basnage, p. 668. Butler's Horæ Biblicæ, p. 88.

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the nobility interposed and concealed the most wealthy, and consequently the most obnoxious, in their houses. Pope Alexander IV. also sent to Naples to exert his authority in their favour.*

Clement V. who, at the commencement of the fourteenth century had removed the papal seat to Avignon, exerted himself to save the Jews from the persecution of the shepherds. He excommunicated them; but the anathemas of the church made little impression on that furious people. This pontiff not only protected the Jews, but afforded them the means of instruction, and ordered that every university should have professors to teach Hebrew, and men whose education rendered them capable of disputing with and convincing the Jews of their errours.†

John XXII. his successor, was for pursuing a different method; and supposed the most probably way of effecting their conversion was to burn all the copies of the Talmud. Several of the bishops having asserted, that they had seen some of this nation ridiculing the Catholicks as they carried the cross in procession, the pope was prevailed upon to issue an edict which expelled them from all the territo-

* Basnage, p. 669. † Ibid.

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ries of the church. In order to avoid the impending evil, they applied to Robert, king of Naples and Sicily, who, being a friend and favourite of the pontiff, persuaded him, upon their presenting him with a large sum of money, to revoke his edict.

Clement VI. treated the Jews with singular kindness and humanity. When they were put to death in various parts of the kingdom upon pretence of poisoning the rivers, he exerted himself to the utmost to suppress the popular fury. He also preserved them from the cruelty of the inquisition, which raged with unrelenting fury against the Albigenses. Under his protection they even maintained a friendly correspondence with some of the members of this bloody tribunal. They presented Emeric, who compiled the directory of the inquisition, a Bible that they pretended was written by Ezra, which the Dominicans have preserved with great veneration. While they were massacred without mercy in every part of Europe, Avignon became their asylum; and Clement VI. their friend and protector, omitted nothing that could tend to soften the lot of the persecuted, and disarm the fury of their persecutors.*

* Basnage, p. 670. Gregoire, p. 8.

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The Jews were numerous and powerful at Bologna during the fourteenth century. They had there built the most magnificent synagogue in Italy, and established an academy. Boniface IX. did not oppose their erecting this synagogue, which, by its size and beauty, excited the attention and admiration of travellers. A. D. 1394.

Though the Jews were generally favoured and protected by the popes, yet, at the commencement of the fifteenth century, John XXIII. issued several edicts against them. He not only raised a persecution in his own dominions, but encouraged and stimulated the Spanish government to massacre this unhappy people. Soon after, however, Nicolas II. being raised to the pontificate, treated them with great indulgence. He preserved those in his own dominions from the inquisition; and sent letters into Spain to prevent their being obliged to abjure their own religion.* 1412.

They had not long enjoyed the patronage of this pontiff before a new persecution was raised against them. Sextus IV. had been prevailed upon to canonize one Simon, who, as was pretended, had been murdered two hundred years before by the Jews in Trent. 1472.

* Basnage, p. 721.

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The publick hatred being thus revived, the populace, in the bishoprick of Trent and in the city of Venice, plundered and massacred the circumcised. The doge and senate were obliged to interpose their authority to suppress the slaughter; but the magistrates of Trent, being less equitable, expelled the Jews from the city.

A. D. 1492. After the Catholicks in Spain and Portugal had banished the Jews, the Italians received them with open arms. Pope Alexander VI. not only relieved the wants of the unhappy fugitives, but enjoined their brethren at Rome, who had treated them with great neglect, to afford them every assistance in their power for establishing themselves in his dominions. He allowed them the same privileges as their brethren had formerly enjoyed; and endeavoured to procure them the free and unrestrained exercise of their religion in all the other states of Italy.*

It is said, that when the Portuguese exiles came to Italy, the university of Jews at Rome offered the pope a thousand ducats on condition of his refusing those of Spain permission to settle in his territories. But Alexander rejected their offer with disdain, and reproved

* Basnage, p. 782.

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them for their barbarity towards their brethren. He also decreed, that they should be banished from his dominions, and the Spanish Jews received in their place; and they were obliged to pay a vast sum before they could obtain a revocation of this order.*

The favourable disposition of pope Alexander towards the Jewish nation, induced many of them from various parts to seek an asylum in his territories. Among others, whom the pontiff's kindness invited to Rome, was the learned rabbi Jochanan, a German, who had been settled at Constantinople, and who was celebrated for his knowledge in the mysteries of the cabbala.†

Part of the Spanish and Portuguese exiles sought an asylum in Naples. But they were exposed to the unrelenting cruelty of the inquisitors in that kingdom, and suffered such terrible oppressions, that the people rebelled. The viceroy was induced to expel them, in order to be delivered from the tyranny of these merciless men. He alleged, that, "as the ancient inhabitants were sound in the faith, there was not any farther need of this bloody

* This curious fact is handed down to posterity by Jewish writers.—*Rossie's Hebrew Biography.*

† Basnage, p. 722.

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A. D. 1534. tribunal." Charles V. soon after authorized his viceroy's conduct by refusing to tolerate them either in Naples or Sicily. This severity, however, did not deter one Ricci, a converted Jew, from dedicating to that monarch a celebrated treatise on what he styled "Celestial Agriculture." He was a physician in Germany and a profound cabbalist, who attempted to prove the mysteries of christianity from that science.*

1539. Paul III. was so indulgent to the Jews, and they became so numerous and powerful during his pontificate, that cardinal Sadolet inveighed against him on account of his partial fondness for an unbelieving race. He asserted, that this pontiff was kinder to them than to the Christians; and that none could be raised to civil or ecclesiastical dignities but through their favour and interest; while at the same time he persecuted the Protestants. Though the cardinal's remonstrance did not produce all the effect that was desired, yet it caused a redress of the most flagrant abuses. They were, however, sometimes persecuted in Rome; yet it must be admitted that there is no country in the world in which less Jewish blood has been spilled, and in which the rites of humanity have been more respected with re-

* Basnage, p. 723.

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gard to their nation, than in the ecclesiastical state.*

A learned writer has thus accounted for the kindness of the Roman pontiffs to the Jews. "The court of Rome excelled all other courts in policy, craft, and worldly wisdom. It saw the folly of expelling and distressing the Jews; it knew the use that was to be made of an industrious people, skilful in commerce, and in the management of the revenues; who had no particular dislike to papal authority, and no disposition to assist heretics, schismatics, or reformers, and had not credit sufficient to make proselytes to their own religion."†

The persecution of the Jews during the middle ages, which has been related in the five preceding chapters, exhibits in such a striking manner the exact accomplishment of the famous prophecy of Moses, Deut. xxviii. that this chapter appears to be a correct miniature picture of the leading features in their history, drawn by the pencil of inspiration. The reflecting and devout must feel an augmented veneration for the sacred scriptures, while they turn their attention to the complete agreement of the prophecies, and the events which fulfill them; and scepticism and infidelity be con-

* Basnage, p. 722. Letters of certain Jews to Voltaire, p. 41.

† Jortin's Remarks on Ecclesiastical History, Vol. II.

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founded by seeing the history of succeeding ages so accurately delineated, and contemplating, in the fate of this suffering people, a "striking phenomenon, incomprehensible to human reason."

Among other awful denunciations against the Jewish nation, which we have seen fully accomplished in the course of this history, Moses declares, "Thou shalt only be oppressed and spoiled evermore." Numerous instances occur of the cruel oppressions and pillages this devoted race have suffered in England, France, Germany, and Spain. In the east, as well as in Europe, they have been continually subjected to heavy fines and impositions. How often in different countries they have been forced to redeem their lives by vast sums extorted from them! Did sovereigns want pecuniary assistance to carry on their wars, the Jews were compelled to give up their riches. A massacre was generally the prelude to a plunder, as we have seen in various parts of Europe. When banished from England in the reign of Edward I. their estates, which were confiscated, brought immense sums to the crown. When Philip Augustus expelled them from France, he confiscated their estates; yet he soon after recalled this oppressed people in order to fleece them again. They have "every

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where paid for liberty to exist, and have scarcely obtained that of breathing an impure air.

The great lawgiver of the Hebrew nation also declares, "Thy sons and thy daughters shall be taken from thee and given to another people." How exactly has this prophecy been fulfilled in several countries, especially in Spain and Portugal. In the former of these kingdoms the council of Toledo decreed, that the children of the Jews should be taken from them, and educated in the christian faith; in the latter, when this miserable people were expelled, all under fourteen years of age were forcibly detained, in order to be baptized. In the frenzy and despair of the wretched parents at parting with their children, we contemplate the accomplishment of another prophetic denunciation: "Thou shalt be mad for the sight of thine eyes, which thou shalt see." Accordingly we find that some of them, driven to madness, put a period to their own lives; and others, sacrificing nature to their religion, destroyed their tender offspring. Instances of their madness and desperation frequently occur in the preceding chapters—in England, when the Jews in York Castle killed themselves, their wives, and children; in France, when they were assaulted by the shepherds,

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and destroyed their children; in Spain, when a number perished by suicide at the insurrection of Toledo; and in Germany, when persecuted for the pretended crime of stealing a consecrated host, they destroyed themselves, their wives, children, and effects.

After mentioning the oppression and barbarous cruelty the Jews were compelled to endure, and the madness consequent upon their extreme sufferings, Moses declares, "Thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a bye word among all nations, whither the Lord shall lead thee." How exactly has this prophecy been fulfilled upon this unhappy race, who have been consigned to infamy ever since their dispersion. "Is not the pretended avarice, usury, and hard heartedness of a Jew become proverbial?"* In various countries of the east, as well as in Europe, they have been subjected to invidious, humiliating, and disgraceful distinctions, and condemned to wear exteriorly the badges of their abject state; and every where exposed to the insults of the vilest populace. They have been treated as of a different species; and, in several parts of Europe, subjected to the same toll with those animals which

* See David Levi's Defence of the Old Testament in a series of letters to Thomas Paine.

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by their religious principles they abhor.* Pagans, Christians, and Mahometans have agreed in abusing, vilifying, and persecuting the Jews.

The sacred writer proceeds in delineating the horrid outline of their miseries, and declares, "The Lord will make thy plagues wonderful, even great plagues, and of long continuance." The calamities they have endured were indeed the greatest which the world ever witnessed. Ever since the destruction of Jerusalem they have been outcasts from society, subsisting amidst contempt and persecution. "For eighteen centuries the nations of the earth have been treading under foot the remains of Israel." What nation ever suffered so much, and yet continued so long? The chief diversity in their condition has arisen from the various kinds of miseries to which they have been subjected. In christendom they have been despised, calumniated, oppressed, banished, executed, and burned. The tyranny exercised against them has been as capricious as it was cruel. In France they have been at one time compelled to assume the mask of christianity to save themselves from a cruel death; at another epoch the estates of those who renounced Judaism were confis-

* Gregoire on the Reformation of the Jews, p. 58.

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cated. . At one period, they have been banished through superstition ; at another, recalled through avarice. An animated writer of their own nation has observed, " It seems as if they were allowed to survive the destruction of their country, only to see the most odious and calumnious imputations laid to their charge, to stand as the constant object of the grossest and most shocking injustice, as a mark for the insulting finger of scorn, as a sport to the most inveterate hatred. It seems as if their doom was incessantly to suit all the dark and bloody purposes, which can be suggested by human malignity, supported by ignorance and fanaticism."*

* M. Michæl Berr's Appeal to the Justice of Kings and Nations, published at Strasburg, 1801.

END OF VOLUME I.

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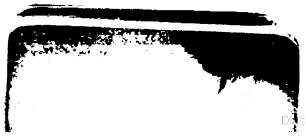

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